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ISSUE 3

JANUARY 1993

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ISSUE 3

JANUARY 1993

A Bee Team Production

HAVE YOURSELF A NINTENDO XMAS!

With 1993 finally upon us, the Super Nintendo market in this country is on the brink of an explosion. This month's cover picture shows the sort of scene you'll find happening in more than one household this Christmas morning, though perhaps with slightly less colourful characters.

Spiderman (star of one of this month's big official releases) has invited his friends R2D2 (from *Super Star Wars*, one of the big games previewed this month) and Chun Li (from you-know-what) 'round for Christmas morning, and Chun Li's decided to bring her pet Dragon Kid (one of the stars of *Dragon Quest V*, Japan's biggest game) over too. (One look at the size of those teeth and Spidey's not complaining.)

And guess what R2 got for his Christmas present? Yes, a Super Nintendo! (Goodness knows why our heroes look so surprised, though – this *is* a SNES mag after all...)

Featured in this month's packed issue, from top to bottom: *Home Alone 2*, our *Super Mario World* Complete Guide, *Race Drivin'*, *Spiderman & The X-Men* and last, but not least, *David Crane's Amazing Tennis*.

SUPER EXPR

MERRY XMAS EVERYBODY!

This month in Super Express: *Super Star Wars*, the first Future Entertainment Show, The Golden Bee Awards (what?) and how to get the most Nintendo stuff for your money this Chrimbo.

Just time for a quick 'Merry Christmas!' from the team! Clockwise from top left: Jez, Sue, Jonathan, Traci, Jase and Matt. Oh yes, and a 'Happy New Year' too!

Well, we said we were getting bigger, and look – we are. *Super Play* is now a very respectable 116 pages. Goodness knows how much longer we can keep on going up in size like this, but let's not complain while the going's good, eh?

So what've we got this issue? Well, we just ran the most successful computer and console entertainment show of all time at Earls Court – you can read all about it (and about who won the £10,000 prize money at the National Computer Game Championship finals held there) on page 18. In the rest of Super Express this issue we've also got a special Christmas Buyer's Guide for new owners, and your entry form for the first UK Super Nintendo game awards, The Golden Bees. Elsewhere there's a special feature on the future of Super Nintendo CD ROM, a giant *Super Mario World* Player's Guide, a story on *Dragon Quest V* (the biggest selling Super Famicom game in Japan) and reviews of games like *Super Aleste*, *Spiderman & The X-Men*, and the brilliant *Mickey's Magical Quest*.

We take our first detailed look at the Super Scope this issue too, and What Cart? gets a revamp which not only makes it bigger, but also easier to use. Finally, you can't help but have noticed a rather massive double-sided poster/calendar stuck to the back of this issue. Hope you find it useful.

Next month, if we get our act together, the first column from our much-asked-for Japanese correspondent begins. Till then, take care, have a very safe and happy Christmas, and we'll be seeing you just inside the New Year. Cheers, y'all.

Matt Bielby.

Editor

SUPER PLAY PROFILES

Brought to you, in a festive mood, by

MATT BIELBY

Favourite Christmas carol: *Silent Night*
Best Christmas present: My first bike from Halfords
Favourite film they always show on TV at Christmas: *The Great Escape*
Favourite cracker novelty: The fortune telling fish
Where will you be on New Year's Eve?: In Hatchets!
Do you believe in Father Christmas?: I have my doubts, but on balance, yes.

SUE GRANT

Favourite Christmas carol: *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence*
Best ever Christmas present: A fondue set
Favourite film they always show on TV at Christmas?: The Queen's speech
Favourite cracker novelty: The little parachute man
Where will you be on New Year's Eve?: Playing Trivial Pursuit with friends
Do you believe in Father Christmas?: No

JASON BROOKES

Favourite Christmas carol: *Good King Wenceslas*
Best ever Christmas present: Aurora 'Stop Police!', which was like Scalextric, but with smaller cars
Favourite film they always show on TV at Christmas: *Oliver Twist*
Favourite cracker novelty: Plastic elephant
Where will you be on New Year's Eve?: With a rich woman
Do you believe in Father Christmas?: No

ESS

AT LAST! THE GREATEST SCI-FI FILM OF ALL COMES TO SUPER NINTENDO! SUPER STAR WARS WILL BE IN THE UK IN THE SPRING.

SUPER STAR WARS

JVC

Perhaps the most eagerly-awaited game at the moment is *Super Star Wars*. The NES *Star Wars* game was fabulous, but from what we've seen of the Super NES version we're in for something *really* special.

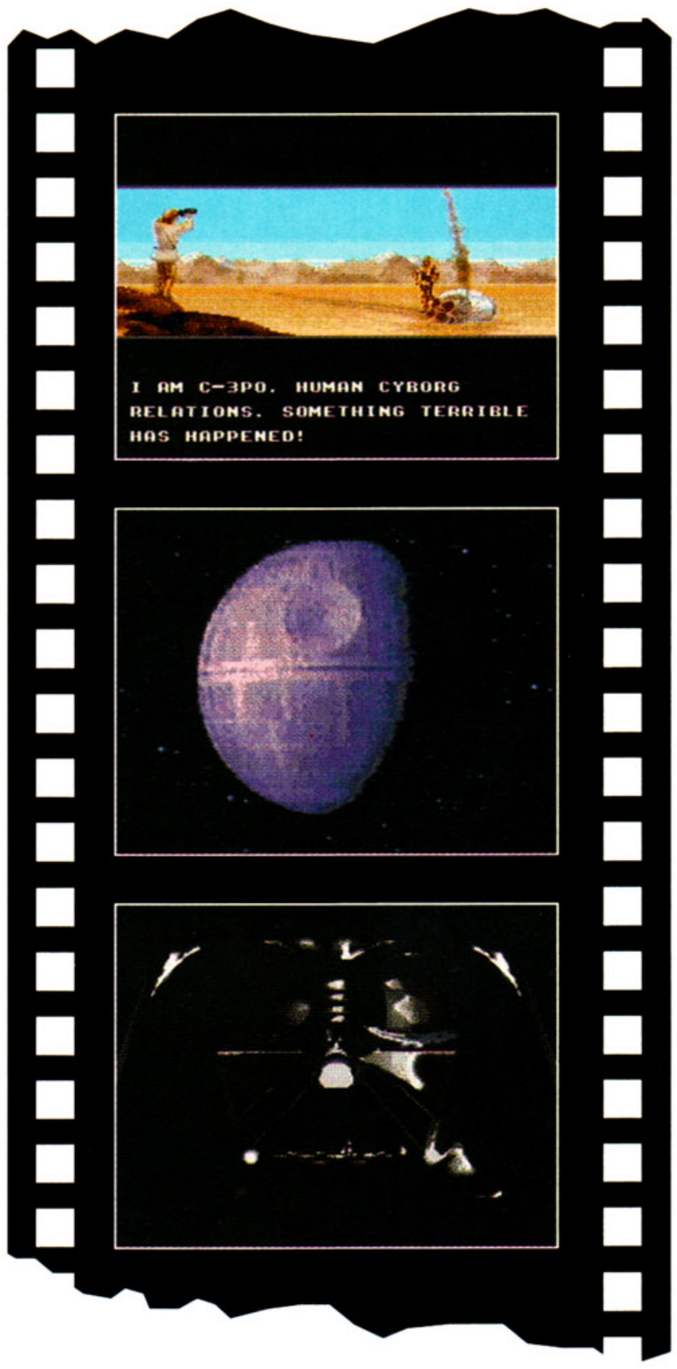
It's a multi-level job, in which you play top *Star Wars* characters (well, Luke, Chewbacca and Han Solo). There are quite a few walking-around-with-light-sabres-and-blasters levels, interspersed with some beat-'em-up bits and gob-smacking Mode 7 3D levels. (The last level, where you fly an X-Wing down a trench on the Death Star, might be a bit of an anti-climax, but only in the light of the brilliant bits that precede it.) Plus, the game boasts what has to be one of the best SNES soundtracks we've heard. The *Star Wars* theme and incidental music are reproduced in all their orchestral glory. With fab intro sequences and links as well, the *Star Wars* 'feel' is captured perfectly.

Super Star Wars should be out on import in the middle of December, and in UK shops next Spring. Look out for a full review next issue.

The bulk of the game is in side-view form. Here, Han Solo's on the roof of a space port, fighting for his life.

The very last level, where you're flying down a trench, attempting to destroy the Death Star.

Chewbacca seems to have been caught up in a bit of a bar brawl, and he's not looking very happy about it.



Part of the intro and (eek!) outro to *Super Star Wars*. At the top we see Luke checking out the desert landscape of Tatooine. What's that on fire over there – could it be Luke's uncle and aunt's homestead? (Yep, reckon it might be.) Next down is the Death Star, and at the bottom, yes, it's Dark Lord of the Sith himself, Darth Vader. This is the screen that appears at Game Over time, in case you hadn't guessed.

JONATHAN DAVIES

Favourite Christmas carol: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*
Best Christmas present: A jumper
Favourite film they always show on TV at Christmas: *The Spy Who Loved Me*
Favourite cracker novelty: The crap ring that never fits
Where will you be on New Year's Eve?: Dunno. Any offers?
Do you believe in Father Christmas?: In principle

TRACI ROCHESTER

Favourite Christmas carol: *Oh Carol* by Neil Sedaka (*Erm, are you sure about this? - Ed.*)
Best Christmas present: Slime
Favourite film they always show on TV at Christmas: *The Wizard Of Oz*
Favourite cracker novelty: CD player
Where will you be on New Year's Eve?: Thimbu (near Tibet)
Do you believe in Father Christmas?: Of course I do!

JEREMY BRIDGEMAN

Favourite Christmas carol: *Joy To The World*
Best Christmas present: A Race'n'Chase set, which was another sort of car racing game
Favourite film they always show on TV at Christmas: *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*
Favourite cracker novelty: The crappy magic tricks
Where will you be on New Year's Eve?: Out of my head!
Do you believe in Father Christmas?: Yes

SUPER PLAY PROFILES QUIZ

Which member of the *Super Play* team was once chased out of a pub and down the street by a furious bouncer, determined to hurt our hero/heroine? As the clocks struck midnight for Christmas day, he/she was to be found cowering in the bushes of somebody's garden, hoping the bouncer would run past. (He did.) First correct answer to: Mad Bouncer, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW wins a T-shirt! Last month's answer: Matt Bielby. We'll announce the winner next issue.

SUPEREXPRESS

FOREIGN RELEASE PREVIEWS

Super Play's guide to upcoming games, this month concentrating on Japanese and American releases.

Check out Datebook on page 113 to see just how many SNES games are now being released in Japan and the US. Here we've selected a few of the more exciting ones for a closer look...

IMAGINEER

One of the new breed of games to use the SNES mouse is the classic _Populous II_. It's been a huge success across a wide variety of computer formats, and is to be released in Japan in January. It's by UK developers Bullfrog, who also have _Powermonger_ due later in the year. Plus, Maxis' _Sim Ant_, again from Imagineer, is scheduled for March.

Populous II, the classic God simulator coming to the Super Famicom in January, and using the mouse too!

KONAMI

Easily one of the best producers of SNES software, Konami have three games lined up for release before March. _Tiny Toons_ is the first, appearing in Japan on 18 December. Although only a 4 meg cart, _Tiny Toons_ was one of the best things shown at the Famicom Space World '92 held in August this year in Tokyo. (See last issue for more details).

Tiny Toons on the Super Famicom due in December – more magic from top software house Konami.

Conventional beat-'em-up action from Konami in *Batman Returns*? Find out next February.

Then there's the long-awaited _Batman Returns_ game, expected in late February, and including some _Final Fight_-style beat-'em-up action.

Lastly, there's _NFL Football_ in March. This looks stunning, with full screen 3D rotation of the pitch and detailed players. More news shortly.

MISAWA ENTERTAINMENT CO

These guys are in some way connected to Imagineer – Peter Molyneux wrote about their wacky horizontal scroller, _Columbus_, last issue. You take Columbus' ship, the _Santa Maria_, on a trip to America – shooting things all the way. It's a very odd concept – we can only hope that rumours that the game's been cancelled aren't true.

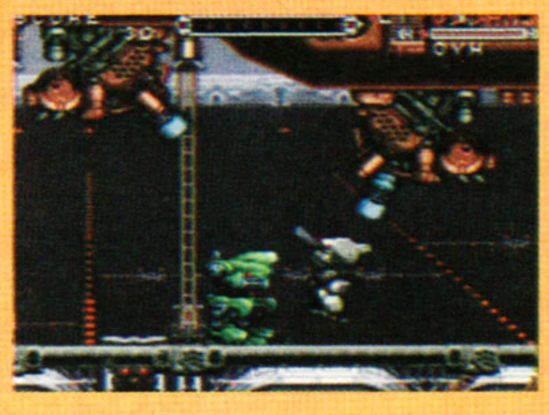
NAXAT

Right then, this is the one we're all waiting for – Naxat's _Super Pinball_, Anyone who's played _Alien Crush_ or _Devil Crash_ on the PC Engine will know that Naxat have a knack for video pinball. This game's been in production for absolutely ages, but is set to hit the Japanese streets in December. We'll have to wait to see if it'll beat _Pinball Dreams_ on the Amiga, but our hopes are high.

Super Pinball (Jaki Crash) from Naxat, producers of the fab PC-Engine and Mega Drive *Devil Crash*.

NCS MASIYA

The latest in a long line of Japanese mecha games is _Assault Suits Valken_ from NCS. What's confused people is that Konami have the rights to release this in the US and UK as _Cybernator_. It's got smart graphics, some interesting effects, and is reviewed next issue. Also from NCS is the follow-up to the _Ranma 1/2_ game, this time on a 12 Mbit cart. The graphics look far better this time. Out in December.



Assault Suits Valken from NCS Masiya. An impressive robot-style shoot-'em-up.

SETA

December sees the release of _F1 Exhaust Heat 2_, which includes a custom DSP chip developed by Seta to speed up the 3D capabilities of the Super Famicom three-fold.

People anxiously awaiting the release of Seta's *Nosferatu* will now have to wait until next year.

***Prince Of Persia* and *Castlevania* fans are in for a treat next year, when the extremely creepy-looking and overdue platform game *Nosferatu* finally appears. All Seta would tell us is that it's scheduled for the first quarter of '93. Be patient!**

Spooky goings-on in the castle of Nosferatu. *Prince Of Persia* meets *Dracula*?

SQUARE

The biggest release in Japan now is _Final Fantasy V_, due on 6 December. Expect to see the US version (_Final Fantasy III_) next year. Incidentally, Enix's _Dragon Quest V_ – the most popular Super Famicom release yet in Japan, on page 60 of this issue – is due next year in the US, to be released there in its _Dragon Warrior_ guise.

Final Fantasy V due on 6 Dec in Japan – queues of RPG-crazy Japanese should start appearing soon...

SUNSOFT

Besides the ace _Road Runner_ game, _Death Vally Rally_ (which should be out by the time you read this), Sunsoft have something called _Puggsy_ in development by UK software house Psygnosis. The graphics are looking fairly scrummy at the moment, but there's little else to report.

Psygnosis' *Puggsy* currently in development for the Super NES. Cute, huh?

TONKIN HOUSE

The producers of the brilliant sports game _Super Tennis_ now have a volleyball game on Japanese release. If _Volleyball Twin_ is as good as its predecessor we'll be very happy. Full review next issue.

The producers of *Super Tennis* have this great looking volleyball game available now.

THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

Sorry, that's all we've got space for, but we'll have a lot more import previews next issue, in a special extended section.

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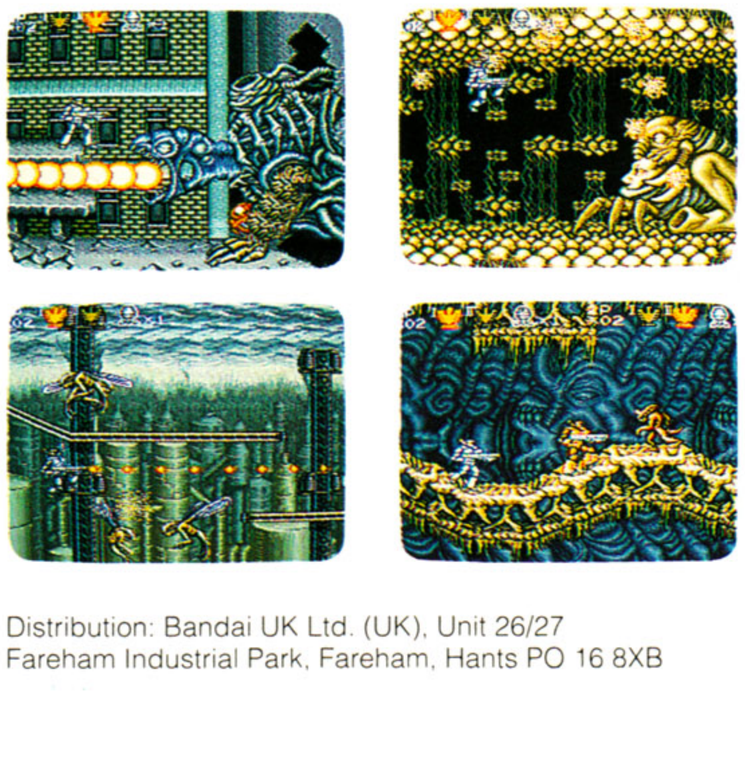

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NEW BUYERS START HERE

DEAR SANTA...

The Super Nintendo will be one of the most popular presents of them all this Christmas. However, there's a bewildering selection of versions to buy, and even more places to get them from. To ensure you get the most for your money this yuletide, why not follow *Super Play*'s unique Christmas buyer's guide..?

It's *Super Play*'s Christmas Buying Guide

BUNDLES OF FUN!

There are currently four different ways to buy a Super Nintendo on the high street. All are reasonably decent value, considering just how wonderful the SNES is, but which is *best*?

Super Nintendo 'Solus Set' £109.99

If the Super Nintendo was a car, this would be the 1.0 Popular model. You just get the machine and one controller, but that's it. With no games, you could be in for a very quiet Christmas. It's also fairly hard to get hold of – many shops don't carry it.

Super Nintendo *Super Mario World* pack £129.99

The SNES was first available in a pack containing the machine, a copy of *Super Mario World* and two controllers. The price has come down by £20, but one of the controllers has gone. Old packs may still be around, often priced cheap to clear.

Super Nintendo Super Scope pack £159.99

Purely in terms of plastic per pound, this seems like the best value. It contains the SNES, one controller, the Super Scope and a cart with six games on it. However, there is a big 'but' here – we don't like the Scope much (see page 54 onwards for details).

Super Nintendo *Street Fighter II* pack £159.99

This one's got the lot: a SNES, a controller and the brilliant *Street Fighter II* (normally selling for an incredible £65). Bear in mind, though, that to really appreciate *Street Fighter II* you'll need a second controller so two can play.

Super Play's Advice

So which one to get? Well, we'd discount the Super Scope pack straight away. If you've read our review of it you'll know why: the Super Scope's a nice piece of kit, but the games are awful, and there's no prospect of any decent ones on the horizon. The basic pack with no game doesn't really make economic sense, either, when for an extra £20 you could have the *Mario* pack. That leaves the *Mario* and the *Street Fighter II* packs. Both feature games you've absolutely *got* to buy, so the deciding factor is which one you want first, and how much you can afford to spend. Best value of all, though, could be old stocks of the two controller *Mario* pack, now knocked down to £129.99 to clear. Surely an excellent buy.

SHOPPING AROUND

GETTING THE BEST DEAL ON YOUR HIGH STREET

You're unlikely to find anyone discounting the Super Nintendo itself, as Bandai, who distribute the machines, don't actually give retailers any profit margin on it to speak of in the first place. The money lies in selling games, and the more clued-up shops will try just about anything to gain your loyalty...

COMET

Buy your Super Nintendo from Comet and they'll give you a discount card which gives you 10% off every game you buy there from then on.

BOOTS

For each £10 you spend on games at Boots you'll get what they call a 'Collect & Save' stamp, which you stick on a special card (above). Once you've collected five stamps you're entitled to a £5 saving off your next game. 10 stamps are worth a £15 saving. (They're running a similar offer on music and video items, and the stamps are interchangeable.) What's more, buy your Super Nintendo at Boots and you'll get five stamps to start you off.

DIXONS

Step into Dixons and you'll be bombarded with freebies. For a start, there's a 'buy 10, get 1 free' offer – each time you buy a game you'll get a stamp, and once you've collected 10 you'll get a free game. On top of that, spend over £50 on games and they'll give you a free LCD game, worth £9.99 – either a *Bart Vs The Space Mutants* or a *Smash TV* one. (Oh yeah, and you also get given a copy of something called 'Game Zone'. Bins are provided in-store.)

WH Smith, Tandy and Argos aren't planning any offers at the moment. Oh, and don't forget to check out the independent retailers for assorted special deals too.

MAIL ORDER: HOW TO WIN

One of the best ways of getting a good deal when buying new games is through mail order companies (see ads in *Super Play*) – especially if you want the newest imports for US or Japanese machines. Follow these simple rules, for trouble-free buying:

- Make sure you're dealing with a reputable company. Ask for recommendations from a friend, or make sure that the company has run adverts in the magazine before.
- Beware of companies without an address on their advertisement.
- Ring to confirm that the game is in stock before sending any money.
- Beware of any company that is always on an answering machine.
- If ordering goods of more than £100, try to use a credit card. That way you're likely to be insured against scruple-free fly-by-night merchants.
- Always keep a record of any correspondence with a mail order company. In the event of your goods failing to arrive, *Super Play* may be able to help you through the Mail Order Protection Scheme (known as MOPS to its friends).

Buying from Abroad

If you're really adventurous, and none of the packs takes your fancy, you might consider buying a US or Japanese Super Nintendo. We covered the pros and cons of this approach in issue 1 of *Super Play*, going into staggering depth, but here's a brief resume:

The American SNES: great value.

THE ADVANTAGES

- The cost. You can pick up an imported US machine, with one controller but no game, for around £100. A Japanese machine, which looks much nicer but works exactly the same, is dearer.
- You'll be able to play import carts on it without having to buy a special adaptor. That gives you access to a much wider software library, but you won't be able to buy the games on most high streets.
- US and Japanese machines run at 60Hz, rather the 50Hz of UK machines – games will play 17.5% faster (as they were designed to).
- You'll get a full-screen picture. Yup – no more nasty black bars at the top and bottom of the screen.

DISADVANTAGES

- Make sure you've got a SCART socket on the back of your TV. (That's one of those rectangular, 21-pin jobs.) Otherwise you won't be able to link up your SNES. (Unless you buy a machine that's been converted to PAL – see below.)
- Even then it might not work. You'll need to check whether your TV can cope with a 60Hz signal. Either check in the instructions or with the maker. As a rule, older TVs are less likely to be compatible.
- If you want to play officially-released UK games you'll need to buy an adaptor. You'll also need a bridge adaptor if you want to play US games on a Jap machine.

OTHER COMPLICATIONS

Most imported machines are sold exactly as they are abroad, with only the power supply changed to allow for mains voltage differences and a SCART lead included. With these machines you'll need a TV that's got a SCART socket and will work at 60Hz. However, some dealers can sell you a machine that's been converted to produce a PAL signal. That means you won't need SCART – it'll plug straight into your aerial socket – but if you want to make the best use of your SNES you'll still need to make sure your TV will work at 60Hz.

WHO TO BUY FROM

Check out the mail order ads this issue for some good potential sources of foreign SNES stuff.

Jap Super Famicom: expensive.

SUPER NINTENDO VS MEGA DRIVE

Which is best?

A foregone conclusion, you might think. Nevertheless, just so you know you're making/or have made the right decision, here's how the two machines weigh up:

The Mega Drive, a very tasty machine...

THE MEGA DRIVE

A 68000 processor running at 8 MHz, 64 colours on screen at once, 80 sprites, 7-channel FM sound. The machine's been around for four years now, so it's a bit long in the tooth, but games-wise it has the advantage of huge UK software base, including some really impressive titles like *Sonic The Hedgehog 2.*

THE SUPER NINTENDO

A special 65sc816 processor running at a leisurely 3.58 MHz, 256 colours from a palette of 32 thousand-odd, 128 sprites, eight-channel PCM sound, 3D scaling facilities. The specs are superior to the Mega Drive's in virtually every respect. The SNES' low-speed processor *can* be a liability in the wrong hands – hence the infamous 'SNES slow-down' on some games. However, used properly, it can do things that wouldn't be possible on other machines. Just look at *Mario Kart* for proof.

The machine plays digital samples CD-style, making for great sound, too.

...but not as tasty as one of these!

Super Play's Advice

Buy the Super Nintendo, of course. True, the Mega Drive's lower price (and lower cart price), arguably sexier looks and bigger software library make it seem like the better bet to the uninitiated, but when it comes to sheer game and hardware quality the SNES has it beat all hollow. And we predict that over the next few months the price and software numbers gaps will narrow significantly too.

ONLY IN JAPAN...

The more you learn about Japan – home of the Super Nintendo – and the Japanese themselves, the stranger, more different it all seems. For instance, a recent all-star wedding there has rocked the nation, yet nobody outside of the country has ever heard of either bride *or* groom...

SUMO WRESTLING HERO WEDS 'JAPAN'S MADONNA'

● In a shock wedding last October, sumo superstar Takahanada married model, singer and national sex symbol Rie Miyazawa – before any of Japan's normally bang-up-to-date tabloid news hounds realised they even knew each other! When the news broke it immediately dominated every newspaper and news broadcast in Japan – even the Prime Minister, Kiichi Miyazawa (no relation to the bride), was stunned, saying 'it is an amazing thing.'

Takahanada, only 20 years old, won the last national sumo championship – despite weighing a mere 298lbs (which is tiny for a sumo). He and his 21-year-old brother, Wakahanada – both being young, good looking and, a quality much prized in Japan, modest – have recently been responsible for a massive upsurge in interest in the sport, especially amongst the young.

Ms Miyazawa, on the other hand, isn't modest at all. She's recently risen out of the obscurity which normally greets most Japanese aidoru (or 'idols') – good looking model/singers normally given short lived but glamorous mini-careers by big Japanese record companies – by publishing a book of Madonna-style nude pictures. Despite the fact that the book was rather tame by Western standards, it was enough to send her popularity skyrocketing immediately afterwards. She's now one of the best known faces in Japan, and currently stars in a popular health drink commercial with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

● Takahanada appears regularly on Channel 4's sumo wrestling coverage. Ms Miyazawa has yet to be offered a recording contract outside of her native Japan.

Street Fighter II:

THE EASY WAY!

TURBO TOUCH 360

by Hornby/Triax

Ever tried accessing some of the special moves on *Street Fighter II*? Tricky, aren't they? The Super Nintendo version might be a brilliant conversion, but playing it is horribly hampered by the awkwardness of some of the more difficult moves. The only remedy up till now has been to buy a giant Capcom Power Stick Fighter or similar joyboard with the right number of buttons for the game, which could cost you up to £70.

No more tearing your hair out trying those tricky moves with the Turbo Touch.

Thank goodness for Hornby, then, who are starting to import this thing – the Turbo Touch 360 by Triax. It looks like a normal SNES controller, but the touch-sensitive pad (the lightest touch will allow you to perform a move) is very different. One advantage of this (according to Hornby) is that you're less likely to get 'finger fatigue or blisters' playing your fave games (yeah, right). The second, and far more important, advantage is that it's much easier to do tricky moves, mainly those that need accurate diagonal or 360° control. For instance, we've never been able to do Zangief's 360° Piledriver move with any degree of consistency before – now we can do it every time.

To be fair, the Turbo Touch 360 is pretty damn useless at driving games (it's *too* sensitive) and some other game types, but as a specialist controller for dragging out whenever it's *Street Fighter II*-time (or whatever) it's pretty hard to beat. And at around £20 from most specialist computer game outlets and many toy shops it shouldn't break the bank either.

AND THERE'S MORE!

Two more nifty joypads line up for your approval!

JOYCARD (EUROPEAN VERSION)

by Fire

Here's another aftermarket special joypad, an alternative to your standard Nintendo model. It works on UK or import consoles, it looks fairly similar to the standard pad (if a bit longer and thinner), but has the advantage of slow motion control and auto-fire. The extra features are neat, but not essential (though many Super Nintendo games have built in autofire, some don't – including *Cosmo Gang*, reviewed this issue – and that's where it comes in useful). At £14.99 from Shekhana Consoles, Tel (081) 340 8565, it's a decent buy, but you'll have to work out for yourself if it's worth £2 more than a normal Super Nintendo pad for the number of times you'll need autofire.

Joycard with autofire.

SN PRO PAD CLEAR

by Quickjoy

Clearly an attractive buy.

This joypad's a bit of a winner in the looks stakes, even we have to admit – it's a clear jobbie (so you can see all the workings, er, working away while you play), and is again shaped roughly like the standard unit. It's rather nicely finished, too – it feels good in the hand, certainly, and again comes with autofire. Once again the price is £14.99 from Shekhana Consoles, and it's probably the more attractive buy of these two – if only 'cos it looks so good.

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU THINK

YOU ARE TAKING PART IN A MOVIE

Nintendo

ROBOCOP 3

SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM™

PAL VERSION

OLD DETROIT. The streets are full of danger. Rampaging hordes of Splatter Punks run riot while the corrupt forces of the Rehabs sweep the streets, turning the night into a deadly scenario. Only one man can stand alone against such numbers. A man like no other man. Robocop. Once again, the cybernetic lawman must face insurmountable odds as crime and corruption threaten to tear the city apart. With state-of-the-art weaponry, a skin of steel and nerves to match he stalks his prey...evil-doers everywhere!

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THE FIRST ANNUAL SUPER PLAY READERS' AWARDS

More coveted than an Oscar, more thrilling than a *GamesMaster* Golden Joystick – yes, it's the *Super Play* Golden Bee Reader Awards. Just wait until you see the real, solid gold ones we've run up! (*Er, what? – Ed.*)

IT'S THE GOLDEN BEES!

VOTE HERE FOR THE GOLDEN BEE AWARDS 1993!

That's right – this is your chance to vote for your favourite SNES games, companies and programmers! We know which games we like – what we don't know, for sure, are exactly which ones light *your* fire. Hence these new awards. Once we've processed the forms we'll not only print the results, but we'll be sending out certificates to the winning developers telling them that they've won, too.

SO WHAT'S THE POINT?

Well, for one thing, you have the chance to see your favourite games get the recognition they deserve. For another, you can find out if your taste tallies with everyone else's. And third, if, through these Readers' Awards, we manage to make it clear to software companies and programmers the sorts of games you lot really appreciate, maybe we'll get a few more up to that standard in the future. It's good news for everyone.

AND NOW: A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

Finally, you'll have noted that the awards have been sponsored by Hornby. They've got Galoob's Game Genie (originally developed by the lovable CodeMasters boys!) to be released in the Spring, which allows you to cheat at SNES games. We have the first 10 UK examples to give away, which we'll be doing around March, shortly before the system is released – and we'll be giving them to the 10 people who make the best guesses as to what the Top Five games will be. Hey, we just want to rewarded some of you for taking the time and effort to contribute your votes!

WIN A GAME GENIE!

The Game Genie: what it is, and what it can do.

Worth £44.99 each, the Game Genie is a very clever thing. Looking almost exactly like a SNES game cartridge, it's been one of the biggest toy sensations of the last year in America, and looks set to cause the same kind of stir here.

Using the Game Genie plugged into your SNES, with your game cart stacked on top of it (like you'd do with an adaptor), you can enter simple codes into your machine to allow infinite energy, infinite lives, infinite all-sorts really. Hornby provide you with loads of codes for popular games when you buy the Genie, plus publish new ones for the latest games every few months. Not only that, they also run a helpline – you can ring up for the latest codes (though they'll only give you three per call, so you don't clog up the line).

However, for the 10 winners of the first Game Genies in the UK we've got a special deal:

- You can ring up for any number of codes you want.
- You'll also get free up-to-the-minute codebook updates.

The American Game Genie – the UK models will look like UK carts.

VOTE HERE FOR THE BIGGEST SUPER NINTENDO AWARDS EVER HELD IN THE UK!

To vote is simple. First, sit down and have a good long think about the games you've played, seen and read about over the past year – anything up to the releases reviewed in this issue count for most of the awards, though (of course) not the games due in January or whenever. Now carefully fill out your answers on this form. (A photocopy or clearly written out copy will do, if you don't fancy cutting up your mag, but remember – multiple entries will result in all of them getting filed in the bin.) Then send it to us at *Super Play* Reader's Awards 1993, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Easy, eh?

PREDICT THE TOP FIVE BEST GAMES AND WIN!

SPONSORED BY GAME GENIE FROM HORNBY

The Golden Bees

SUPER PLAY READERS' AWARDS 1993

To take part in the awards is simple. Just fill out this form, and send it to us at the address at the bottom of the page. All games covered in the awards must have been released in 1992.

Best SNES beat-'em-up

.....

Best SNES shoot-'em-up

.....

Best SNES driving game

.....

Best SNES strategy game

.....

Best SNES simulation

.....

Best SNES sports game

.....

Best SNES platform game

.....

Best SNES licenced game
(ie game based on a film, comics character or other 'outside' source)

.....

Best SNES Role Playing/Adventure Game

.....

Best SNES puzzle game

.....

Most original SNES game

.....

Best SNES graphics

.....

Best SNES sound

.....

Best SNES game of the year

.....

Worst SNES game

.....

Best SNES peripheral
(ie joystick, adaptor or other add on)

.....

Best thing to happen to the SNES market in 1992

.....

Worst thing to happen to the SNES market in 1992

.....

Game we're most looking forward to next year

.....

Favourite international software publisher
(ie software house based outside the UK)

.....

Favourite UK software publisher
(ie company based in the UK currently working on SNES games

.....

Favourite international software developer

.....

Favourite UK software developer

.....

PREDICT THE WINNER AND WIN A GAME GENIE!

As you know, the first ever Golden Bees are sponsored by Hornby, and, in particular, their upcoming Game Genie. We've got the first 10 UK Super Nintendo-specific Game Genie's in the country to give away, and we'll be sending them to the readers who correctly predict, in the right order, the top five reader choices in the Best SNES Game Of The Year category. If you think you know what's going to win, make sure you fill this bit out now!

I predict the top five Best SNES Games Of The Year will be:

1).....

2).....

3).....

4).....

5).....

NAME:.....

ADDRESS:.....

.....

.....

POSTCODE:.....

Now return to form to us at *Super Play* Reader's Awards 1993, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, Bath BA1 2BW pronto! (After all, you don't want *James Bond Jr* to win best licensed game now, do you?)

- TWO OF A KIND -

THE WINNERS!

You are a supreme being - with the power to command the forces of nature - Earthquake, floods, volcanos and oceans. Power to turn plains into barren rocks and oceans into fertile land with promise of plenty. Limit to your power is your followers, scattered on the worlds throughout the universe. They raise crops, build towns, and multiply thus increasing your power to smite your enemies, the followers of evil. Can you control and increase this power to eventually get rid of the evil. Fourteen different worlds await your conquest.

Blistering pace and superb tactical game play has made KICK OFF a legend in computer games world wide. Packed with options like game speed, KIT DESIGN, edit teams and player names, 4 different types of competitions, it provides a wide variety of game play. Action Replay facility lets you enjoy the glorious moments at leisure. Battery back up ensures that the competition results, kit design, team and player data is stored for instant recall.

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imagineer

SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

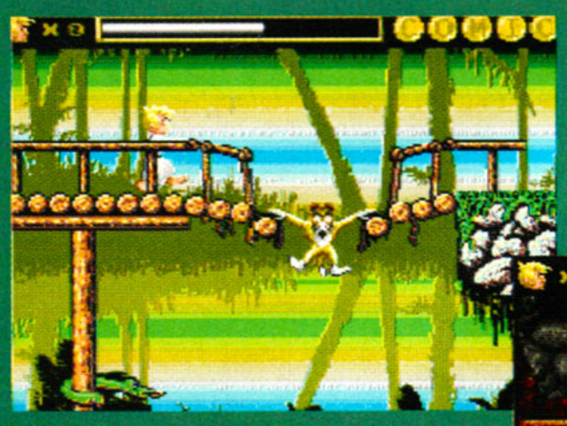
OCEAN, THE RED-NOSED SOFTWARE PUBLISHER

SLEEPWALKER

Ocean

SleepWalker **is Ocean's attempt to do a bit of good for the world. Launched to complement Red Nose Day 4 (on 12 March), it's hoped the game will raise £500,000 for Comic Relief. About £5 will go to charity from each copy sold. And there'll be a National *SleepWalker* Challenge, too.**

As for the game itself, well, you can probably work out for yourself what it involves. It's a neat idea. You're in control of this rather flea-bitten dog, and he's got to look after a sleepwalking kid, who's wandering lemming-like round lots of peril-strewn levels. If the kid gets woken up, you lose a life. You've got to defuse bombs, fight off baddies, bridge gaps in the floor and do anything that's necessary to clear a path for him. Much of the game's appeal will lie in its cartoony graphics, which illustrate wonderfully the nasty things happening to the dog.



A 'hangdog', perhaps? The things people'll do for charity, eh?

Arrrrgh! A ghost! Get rid of it, before it wakes up the kid!

The Red Nose link seems tenuous – the characters will have red noses, apparently, and there'll be some 'crazy voice overs' from Lenny Henry – but *SleepWalker*'s heart is in the right place.

Work hasn't yet started on the SNES version – the pics here are of the Amiga game, scheduled for a January release – but we're assured that the programmers should get cracking 'pretty soon'. Expect a graphical improvement over the Amiga version, which looks pretty scrummy in itself.

If all else fails, stall the kid till the danger has passed.

Between each level there'll be a neat graphical interlude.

Another *Super Mario Kart* compatible adaptor!

Oh yes, it hasn't taken long for the adaptor people to come up with assorted little widgets that'll allow you to play even the most adaptor resistant of imported games on your UK SNES – even the recent special-chip equipped *Super Mario Kart*. Last month we quoted the SNES Game Converter (European version) by Spellbound as the first of these (Datel and others have since joined them) but no – seems an outfit called Q System, (0727) 826 753, beat 'em all to it. Their adaptor costs £17.50. So now you know.

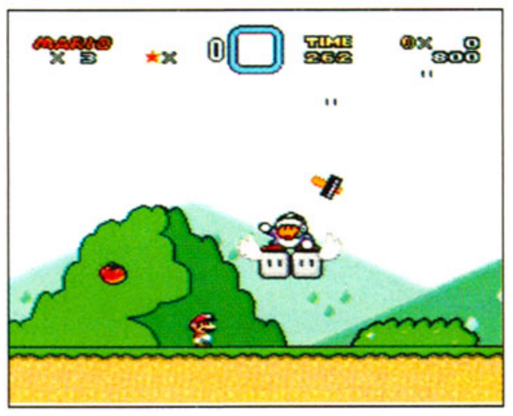
SUPER PLAY'S HOT LIST

Expecting a Super Nintendo for Christmas? Wondering what to ask for to go with it? Here are five of *Super Play*'s fave SNES games.

SUPER MARIO KART

NINTENDO: The UK release of the most-played game in the *Super Play* office has been brought forward to December, just in time for Christmas. And it's absolutely fabulous. The race tracks are challenging and fun, with one player or two, and on top of that there's an absolutely brilliant two-player bonus game. If this issue of *Super Play* is late, you'll know why.

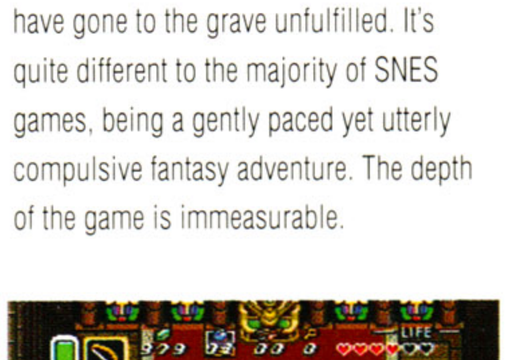
SUPER MARIO WORLD



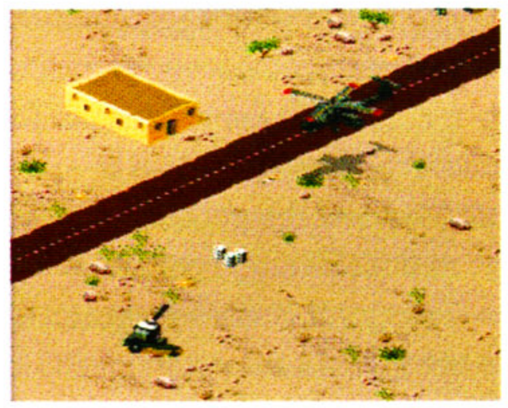
NINTENDO: It might seem superfluous to be recommending the most famous, and perhaps the best, Super NES game of all time, but the fact is that lots of people will be buying SNES' this Christmas that don't come with a copy of *Mario World*. We'd just like to make sure they don't forget to pick up a copy. *Super Mario World* is massive and ridiculously playable.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

NINTENDO: *Zelda* was covered in issue 2, the gist of the review being that if you die without ever having played *Zelda*, you'll have gone to the grave unfulfilled. It's quite different to the majority of SNES games, being a gently paced yet utterly compulsive fantasy adventure. The depth of the game is immeasurable.



DESERT STRIKE



ELECTRONIC ARTS: We haven't yet reviewed this, but we've decided what we'll be saying next month when we do. On the Mega Drive, *Desert Strike* is a fabulous shoot-'em-up (with a strategic side) where you fly round in a helicopter blowing up things in the desert. The SNES version, from what we've seen, looks just as good.

RAMPART

ELECTRONIC ARTS: A game that proves that decent graphics aren't essential for a classic. The game is fun in one-player mode. With two it becomes obscenely addictive, and dangerously competitive.

IT WAS THE BIGGEST COMPUTER & CONSOLE GAME SHOW EVER HELD IN THE UK! WERE YOU THERE?

FUTURE ENTERTAINMENT SHOW 1992

COMPLETE SHOW REPORT

By Matt Bielby

One of the two show halls – the one that held all the big software house displays, as well as Nintendo's stand – on the Thursday, the quietest day of the show. If we'd taken this picture on the Saturday you wouldn't have been able to see the red carpet at all – just a sea of bodies! Now that's show business!

So, were you there or were you square? Actually, if you did go you're far more likely to be flat than square – the show was absolutely packed with people, on the Saturday and the Sunday particularly, with Earls Court quickly reaching peak capacity. Before someone had the smart idea of opening one of the outside doors to redirect the crowd, it was taking an average of 30 minutes to get the 20 yards from Hall One to Hall Two, such was the crush of people trying to get through the (actually fairly wide, but in the event woefully inadequate) connecting corridor.

Indeed, such were the numbers arriving at the show over the weekend that for long stretches at a time the front doors had to be shut, with nobody allowed in. Radio One broadcast warnings to stay away, the local tube station was shut for a time, a couple of scuffles apparently broke out amongst the waiting crowd, while inside some people fainted from exhaustion – it all added up to excited 'Mario Madness!' reports in at least six of the national Sunday papers, with Earls Court staff claiming the crowds were the biggest they'd ever seen!

The show was certainly a roaring success as far as attendance was concerned, then, which makes it very good news for Future Publishing, the show organisers, as well as the people behind this very magazine. After all, it's the first event of this size we've ever held, so it's nice to see it so popular, and go off so (relatively) smoothly. We'll certainly be holding a similar event next year, when the show will not only be bigger, it'll be held at the far larger Olympia venue, hopefully allowing show goers a little more room to breathe.

But that's all yet to come – what we're really interested in here is this year's event. So what was there actually at the show to see?

Well, for a start there were an awful lot of people in very silly costumes. Prince Of Persia, over on the Domark stand, seemed to have forgotten his turban (he looked more like a slightly lost member of Spandau Ballet), but the triple whammy of a convincing-looking Pitfighter, James Bond's jet-powered Aston Martin and a couple of Bond girls more than made up for it.

Over at Sega, a slightly overweight Sonic and Tails bounced around, the actors inside obviously struggling under the heat and the weight. There was no Mario at the show –

Throughout the show, competitions and playing challenges were run from the vast video wall at one side of the main hall. Here's the view from the stage during one challenge – a sea of bodies as far as the eye can see!

Dragon Quest V queues, eat your hearts out! Here's the line that stretched round the block outside FES at the weekend – and it just got bigger!

The sight that first greeted most visitors who came in through the main doors – a giant Ocean helter skelter cum video screen display! The view from the top of one of these was incredible – as was the ride down!

Nintendo seem to have missed a trick there – but James Pond, a penguin (we weren't sure what he was there for, until we remembered Penguin biscuits sponsored Pond's newie, *Aquatic Games*) and a less-than-convincing Darth Vader were in evidence. So were Lemmings – hundreds of them. Just about every 10 year-old at the show seemed to have had his or her hair sprayed green and face painted blue on the Psygnosis stand, before bodily throwing themself (dressed in sticky velcro suit) at a vertical 'Splat!' fly wall.

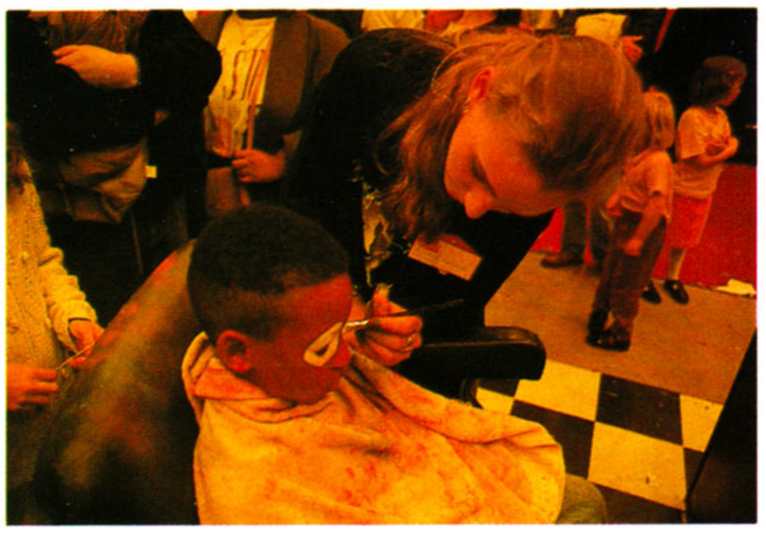
Other Things To Do at the show included an excellent dry-ice filled, inflatable maze in which show goers ran around playing Lazer Tag – most said the queue (which sometimes ran to three hours!) was worth it. Then there was the Radio One Roadshow (where prizes could be won and stars like MC Mario, with his rousing version of Top 10 song *Super Mario Land*, listened to), the Future 3D Experience (the less said about that the better), Virtual Reality machines to be awed by, dodgems to bounce around on and plenty more.

Meanwhile, 'Hacksaw' Jim Duggan, the *WWF* wrestler, got the crowd going on his periodic visits to the video wall and picture signing sessions on the Acclaim stand, the staff of most of Future's magazines did assorted seminars on our own stand (hi if we saw you there), and various gameplaying challenges were run throughout the show. You could win a leather jacket if you got over a certain score on Mega Drive *Road Rash II* at the Electronic Arts stand, you could win assorted goodies at Gremlin if you did well at *Nigel Mansell* (Amiga version) – and then there were the National Computer Games Championships 1992.

This is, as you probably know, the biggest gameplaying event ever held in the UK – the only one to be worked out through heats organised up and down the country, and certainly the only one to ever offer anything like £10,000 in prize money! Even the second prize winner got £4,000, which isn't to be sniffed at.

So how did it go? Well, first off we had the semi-finalists from all over the country, who converged on Earls Court on the Saturday for the play offs. In the semi's our hopefuls went through *Spiderman And The X-Men* on the SNES (see review page 72 this issue), *Tazmania* (Mega Drive) and *Road Rash* (Amiga), showing off their gameplaying skills in front of massive crowds, commentated on by (amongst others) *Super Play* publisher Steve Carey. At the end of all that our finalists turned out to be Allan Brett, a 17 year-old student from Nottingham, and Tony Eatin, who's 26 years-old and comes from Stafford.

On the Sunday, then, the two met again for the finals, this time introduced by a slightly more famous presenter – *Bad Influence!* TV star Andy Crane. The games this time were *Lemmings II* (Amiga), *Sonic 2* (Mega Drive) and, of course, our very own *Street Fighter II*. And the competition was fierce – the two contenders sitting at their consoles at opposite sides of the giant video wall, their faces (blown up to about six foot across on the screen!) locked onto the games, their



On the Psygnosis stand, a team of make-up girls painted punters up as either *Lemmings* (green hair, etc) or *Tomatoes* (red faces) before dressing them in velcro suits and having them jump at a bar fly wall. Weird!

A million minders surround top *WWF* wrestler 'Hacksaw' Jim Duggan as he arrives at the show to host competitions and sign autographs. Goodness knows why he needed them – he looked big enough to look after himself!

Here's 'Hacksaw' signing pictures and pressing flesh on the Acclaim stand. Other celebs spotted at the show included Dominik Diamond, *Neighbours* star Kristian Schmid and, of course, *Bad Influence*'s Andy Crane.

This guy won a big cup and a free holiday to Disneyland in a *Super WWF* competition sponsored by Acclaim, and hosted by 'Hacksaw' Jim Duggan. He looks a bit shell-shocked by the whole experience, for some reason!

Matt's lost for words – someone's obviously asked him that old 'what's the difference between PAL and SCART' chestnut again. Thank goodness Jason's on stage to delegate the question to, eh?

Over on the Future stand in the trade hall, 'meet the magazine teams' and 'meet the programmer' seminar sessions were run throughout the four days. Here's a typical Nintendo panel – Matt and Jason of *Super Play* are joined by Ade Price (of Ask Ade and *GamesMaster* magazine fame) and *Total!*'s James Beavan. Talk concentrated on (surprise, surprise!) the price of carts.

Nigel Mansell's Formula 1 Williams was on show on the Gremlin stand, apparently the very car he won the World Driver's Championship in. (Goodness knows what he was driving in Australia that weekend, then...)

concentration total. In the end though there could only be one winner, and that winner was Allan – currently the richest (and almost certainly the most popular) 17 year-old in the North Midlands.

Not all the gameplaying going on at the show ending up with someone being presented with a mega prize, however. On software house stands up and down the hall, there was plenty of joystick-bashing going on just for the sake of it. Acclaim showed off stuff like *Spidey & The X-Men*, *Krusty*, *Alien 3*, *Terminator 2* (a Super Scope game taken from the coin-op), *Super WWF*, *Crash Dummies* and *George Foreman's KO Boxing*, while Ocean's massive video wall splashed things like *Lethal Weapon 2*, *Addams Family 2*, *Cool World*, *Pushover* (reviewed this issue), *Exhaust Heat* and *Robocop 3*. Over on the massive Nintendo stand they had 18(!) *Street Fighter II*'s lined up for you to play, as well as *Top Gear*, *UN Squadron*, *Pilotwings*, *Blazing Skies* (the US version of *Wings II*, reviewed last issue), *Turtles IV*, *Super Aleste*, *Super Probotector*, *Super Mario Kart*, *Super Soccer*, *R-Type*, *Super Mario World*, *Paperboy 2*, *Final Fight*, *Zelda III*, *Rival Turf*, *Super Tennis*, *F-Zero*, the first *Addams*, *Super Adventure Island*, *Ultraman*, *Castlevania* and more.

Then there was Electronic Arts with *NHLPA Hockey '92*, *Desert Strike*, *Madden '93* and *PGA Tour Golf*, UbiSoft with *Jimmy Connors Pro Tennis Tour* and plenty of others dotted about the place too. (Okay, I admit it – I gave up counting at that point.)

On the Radio One Roadshow truck, live broadcasts were made throughout the show. The rest of the time competitions like this one were organised, or bands perfromed. Ambassadors Of Funk with MC Mario went down well!

It wasn't all just looking, though – on many of the stands you were actively encouraged to part with your cash, and some of the bargains on view made it very difficult to resist. Datel offered £10 off their Action Replay cartridge, for instance, selling it for £39.99, while Virgin Retail had a fiver off *Street Fighter II*, and *Krusty's Super Fun House* for a special bargain £29.99!

Over in the second hall of the show, where all the retail stands were situated, there were even more bargs to be had – we saw UK Super Nintendo adaptors for a mere £4.99 (goodness knows how well they work), while import games were as low as £25 per cart. Over at Complete Entertainment, probably the exhibitor with the most Super NES stuff on sale, crowds were four or five deep at the counter for much of the show.

Overall, then, this year's show was an unqualified success. Sure, there are lessons to be learned – we need a better PA for the video wall, we need a larger venue (this year the narrow passageways between the two halls turned out to be a major liability), and we need some way of making sure not everybody turns up at once (as happened on the Saturday). Having said that, though, this show was excellent – well attended, with lots of good events organised, some excellent stands, and plenty to see and do. And next year's will be even better. Roll on Future Entertainment Show '93!

No wonder they're looking pleased with themselves! Chris Anderson and Greg Ingham, of show organisers Future Publishing, take in the view.

Top: The Future 3D Experience, one of the less successful show attractions.
Right: The finals of the National Computer Games Championships were held here! It was hosted by Andy Crane (among others), the prize money up for grabs was £10,000, and the winner was Allan Brett (the guy with the cheque). Second placer, Tony Eatin, got £4,000.

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AT LAST! A top notch Mega Drive conversion from EA!

DESERT STRIKE (Electronic Arts)

Blow up everything at the airbase, just for the hell of it.

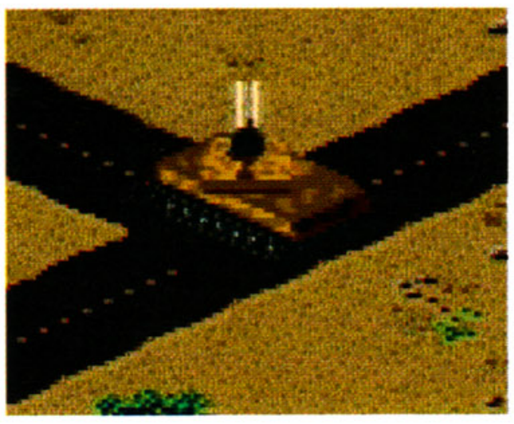
Pick up ammo and fuel and dump your rescued troops.

There are very few reasons for owning a Mega Drive in preference to a Super NES, but one of the solidest has always been *Desert Strike*. Now even that has been blown away like sand in the wind with the release of the Super Nintendo version.

The game, in case you're unaware of it, is loosely based on Operation Desert Storm (all that business with Arabs, oil and Scud missiles of a couple of years ago). In it you're given a massive, heavily armoured helicopter and a huge expanse of hostile desert to fly round it in. The ground is scattered with buildings, air bases, radar stations and baddies (everything from foot-soldiers to tanks), all of which want to be taken out with your machine guns or air-to-ground missiles. Watch out, though, for friendly forces and hostages (which should be rescued). And, of course, you can pick up extra fuel or ammo if you can find it. Each level brings a new stretch of desert and a new set of objectives. They start tough, and get tougher.

The Mega Drive game was spot-on, and from our brief foray the SNES version seems to be just as good. We haven't been too impressed by Electronic Arts' attempts to convert Mega Drive games to the SNES so far (a real shame that, as games like *Madden* and *PGA Tour Golf* are works of genius on the Mega Drive) but *Desert Strike* should make amends – and some. Out now on import, over here in January and reviewed next issue.

● For those who can't wait, you can read the first official UK review of *Desert Strike* in the launch issue of our sister magazine *GamesMaster* (see below), available where you bought this copy of *Super Play* right now!



The tanks take a fair bit of punishment before they die.

Don't forget *GamesMaster* issue 1

It's in the shops as you read this!

That's right, the UK's biggest ever computer and console games magazine arrived in the shops the very same day this issue of *Super Play* did. If you haven't got your copy yet, better rush back to that newsagent and buy one now, hadn't you? Not only does it come with a free double-sided *Desert Strike* calendar, a free 100-page tip book (including loads of SNES game cheats) and some lovely stickers stuck onto the front, not only does it have Dominik Diamond in it, not only does it have the best Mega Drive and Amiga reviews you've ever seen, it gives healthy coverage to the Super NES too. The first issue, for instance, brings you the first ever review of the excellent UK version of EA's *Desert Strike*, plus a *Krusty's* playing guide and more. And what's more, it's only £1.75 a copy! (Why not buy two and give one to a friend?)

The brand spanking new *GamesMaster* magazine – you can't afford to miss it.

BOOKS

Or 'Book', as it might be more accurately titled this month. It's a good 'un though, as Jonathan Davies discovered...

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST GAME SECRETS

Zach Meston.
Prima Publishing, 246pp,
£9.95.
ISBN 1-55958-204-9

If you've been following *Super Play*'s complete solution to *Zelda III*, you'll know that it's an absolutely vast game. So huge, in fact, that if you listen carefully you can almost hear the cartridge creaking under the strain of it all. But, incredibly, even with big lumps of tiny print in two issues of the magazine, we've only really scratched the surface.

Zach Meston will be familiar to readers of *Super Mario World Secrets*, which we reviewed in last month's issue. It's he who's been ascribed the task of charting every facet of *Zelda*, leaving no pixel unturned. And he's got something of an advantage over us, having been given about 25 times as many pages to do it in. (Although he's had to use larger print – ha!)

The results, as with the *Mario* book, are quite humbling. This book is a *Zelda* player's dream. (Assuming he dreams about finding a big book with lots of stuff about *Zelda* in it.) Inside, you won't find a step-by-step guide, like the one we've given you. Instead, each chapter of the book describes a separate aspect of the game. One, for example, explains how to conquer all the bosses, while another lists every object in the game, and where to find it. Others map out all the dungeons, describe all the locations (using a handy grid reference system), and delve into some of the stranger parts of Hyrule. Finally, there *is* actually a step-by-step walkthrough (I fibbed a bit earlier), although it's just a rough outline. And on top of all that, the author has even managed to cram a few reasonably funny jokes in. If I had a hat, I'd be more than happy to take it off to him.

The only slight downer is the way a quarter of the pages have been turned over to the first two *Zelda* games – the ones on the NES. Still, if you've got an NES, even that needn't be a problem. And a bit of background reading never hurt anybody.

If you've exhausted our guide, and would like to make sure you know absolutely everything there there could possibly ever be to know about *Zelda*, you've really no option but to buy this book. Sorry, but you haven't. *Super Play*'s very own Adrian Price, who's played right the way through *Zelda*, and isn't the sort to mince his words, described it as 'really bloody excellent'. Which is recommendation enough for us.

This, and lots of other Super Nintendo-related books, can be obtained from Computer Manuals. They can be contacted by phone on (021) 706 6000, or by post at Computer Manuals Ltd, 50 James Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2BA.

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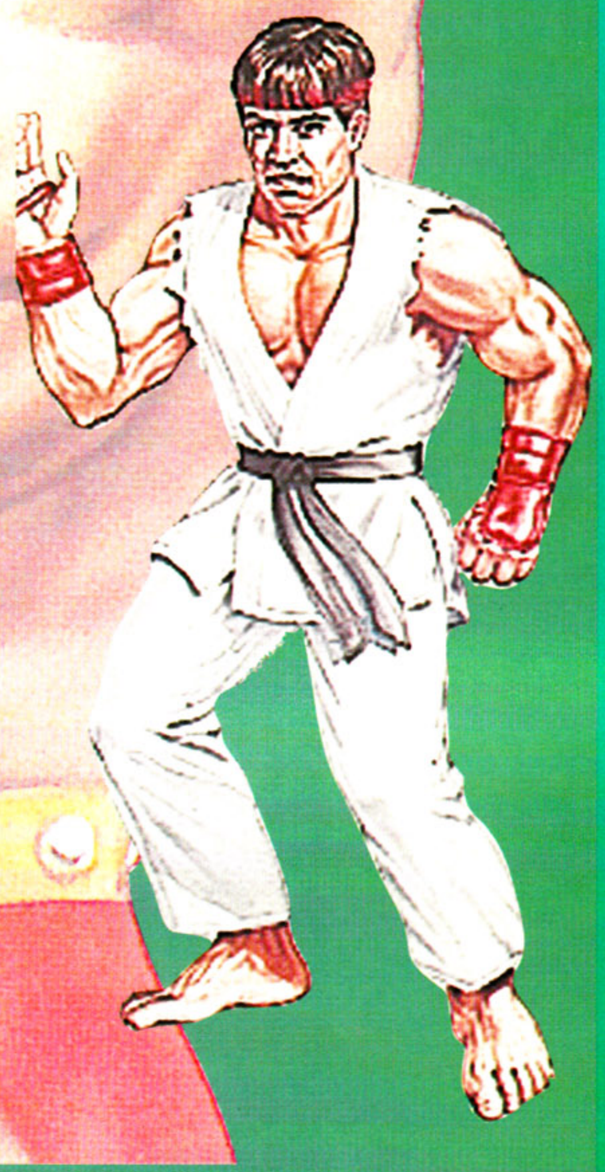

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SUPJAN

ANIME WORLD

SUPER DEFORMED HISTORY

The Super Nintendo and Japanese animation lead intertwined lives in the Land Of The Rising Sun. Almost like they're married, in fact. They're not the only strange bedfellows that country boasts either, as Helen McCarthy explains...

Marriage is a funny thing. Two people, very often with little in common – I mean, they're usually not even the same sex! – declare their intention to unite and produce offspring. These offspring may well share a few characteristics with their parents – that's genetics for you; but in many cases they'll develop in ways no-one could ever have predicted.

That's exactly how the Super Deformed robots and mobile suits of games like *SD Gundam* came into being. In this case, the ill-matched couple were two of the most popular concepts in Japanese culture, the seemingly opposed ideas of cuteness and technophilia.

We looked at the Japanese love affair with Cute last issue. The other great love affair of the twentieth century in Japan is with technology, specifically robot technology. In the aftermath of World War II, the Japanese saw imported technology as the one chance to help their mostly-rural, near-feudal society catch up with the developed and victorious West. Fifty years on, Japan is the new Robotopia.

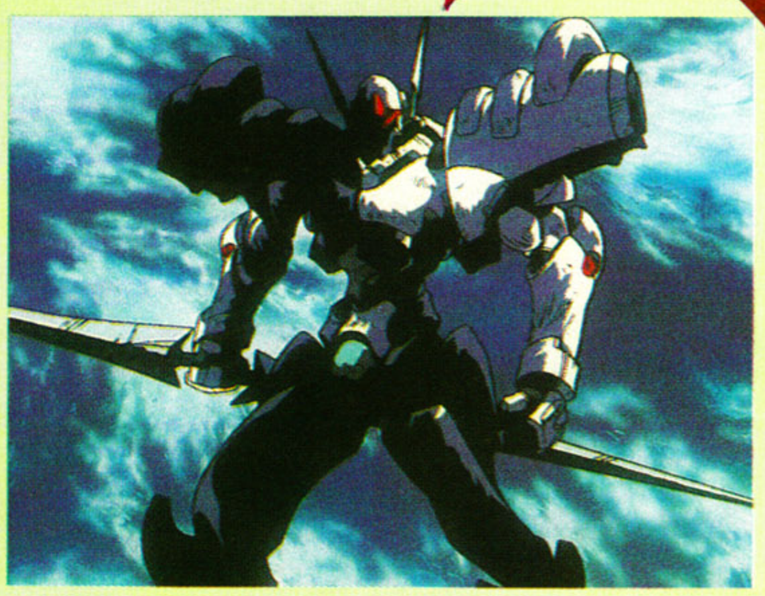
Despite the fact that robots pushed up Japanese productivity to undreamed-of levels, and that there are more working industrial robots there than anywhere else in the world, it's not only for business reasons that Japan loves robots. Tin men, from sentient creations like Tezuka's *Mighty Atom* (*Astroboy* in the US) to operator-driven suits like those in *Mobile Police Patlabor* or the *Gundam* saga, don't rely on the muscles of their human creators. They give the little guy an even chance in the big world, and since Japan is – sumo wrestlers excepted – a nation of little guys, the appeal is obvious. Shiny, hi-tech robots deliver all manner of fantasies, from moving mountains to flying, and they beat the hell out of a moped to impress girls.

But they're not cute. Or, at least weren't, except for the occasional wacky variation, until some bright spark looked at the idea of cute with fresh eyes and dreamed up the utterly Japanese concept of Super Deformity.

'FIFTY YEARS ON (FROM WORLD WAR II) JAPAN IS THE NEW ROBOTOPIA'

Super Deformity is a variation on the Cute concept of the -chan. -Chan, a Japanese suffix meaning darling or dear, is usually added to the names of small children, animals, or boy/girlfriends. Making favourite anime characters cute gives them a whole new lease of marketing life, so a wave of -chan versions appeared.

To make



Left: Mean, moody, magnificent - exactly like a giant robot *should* look.

a character into a -chan (in case you've forgotten my last article), you enlarge the head to about one-third body size and shrink the body. The face is rounded and the eyes wider than ever. The idea worked and so it was used with robots. Girls hadn't really gone for robot toys before – now, suddenly, there was a whole new market for the mighty mecha.

There was still a problem, however. Girls big and little will buy Cute items by the bushel; boys are less likely to do so. How could a self-respecting Japanese high school boy be seen with a cuddly version of his favourite robot?

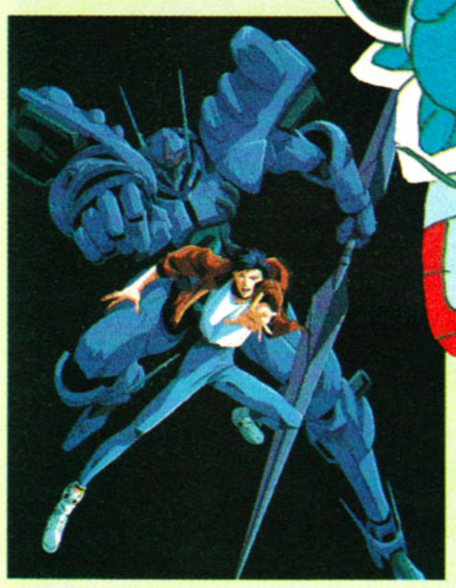
'SD VERSIONS EXCEL AT PARODY, POKING FUN AT THE MOST UNLIKELY SITUATIONS'

Then came another brainwave – if you made these cute, innocent-looking little creatures mischievous, manic and generally disruptive, you could also create a whole new world of stories. The characters' personalities could change with their bodies, without doing violence to fans' passions for their heroes or the continued marketing of the life-size versions. These new -chans could be agents of chaos, just as attractive to small boys as the cute versions were to their sisters. They were even given their own name – Super Deformed, abbreviated to SD.

Comedy has always been a favourite theme for anime, and SD is a perfect comedy vehicle. The *SD Gundam* series takes the heroic nobility of Char Aznable and Amuro Ray and stands it on its head, as the characters of that saga of courage and hope become crazed little mannikins running hotels and playing out their lunatic rivalries at sports days, eating contests, monster bashes and a host of other insane events. The *Gundam* mecha acquired their own SD series and merchandising, independent of the 'real' characters.

The SD concept is everywhere. Ultraman has acquired his own SD anime series, in which the heroic fighter for justice is seen as a harassed salary-man in Ultratown, coping with problems far sillier than in his rubber-suited days. Top animator Nagai Go has an SD series devoted to his own universe, in which menacingly sexy characters like Devilman are sent up to devastating effect. SD versions excel in parodies, poking fun at the most unlikely characters and situations.

And, of course, Super Deformed characters are wonderful vehicles for gameplay. Keep a look out for those enlarged heads and squashed up bodies – they appear in lots of Japanese Super Famicom games. Deformed they may be, but the offspring of this unlikely marriage between massive fighting machines and wide-eyed, short-skirted princesses are definitely Super.



Above:
Another cute little *Gundam* creature.
Left: Hero with one of the giant 'mobile suits' from *Detonator Orgun*.
Below: Two heavily armed *Gundam* suits stand guard.

Uh-oh. Looks like not everybody in Japan takes the concept of the giant robot quite as seriously as they should. Take the *Gundam* robot on the left - not only has be been 'Super Deformed', he's also been dressed in a medieval knight-in-armour outfit! Or what about mighty *Ultraman* - reduced to a cute little elf? And - worse! - these SD versions now rival the 'real' ones for popularity!

ANIME CONTACT
Anime UK Magazine, 70 Mortimer Street, London W1. (£3.50 from good SF/comic shops, or mail order from publishers + 50p p&p.)

MERCHANDISE OF THE MONTH

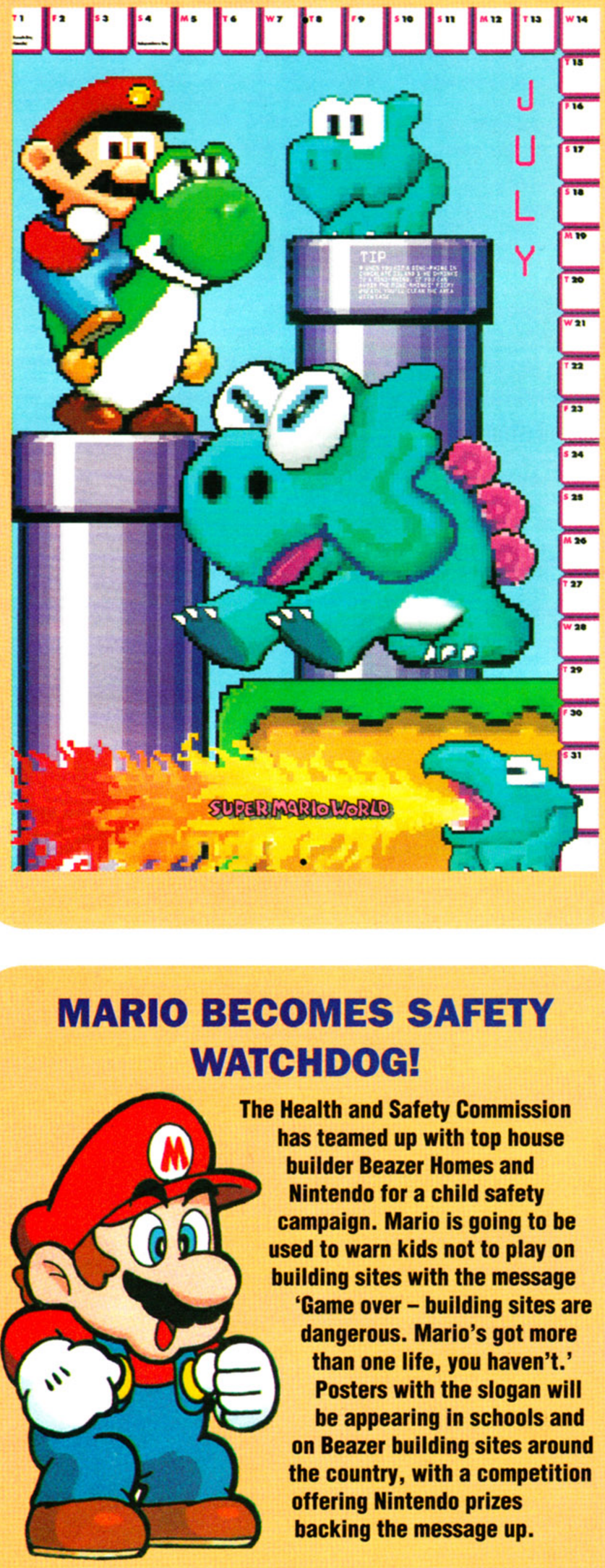
No 2. NINTENDO CALENDAR

PICK UP A HOT DATE (OR 365!)

Girls have calendars with puppies and kittens on, garage mechanics have calendars with naked ladies on, and Athena customers have calendars with black-and-white pictures of people snogging at railway stations. But, until now, games players have been a bit stuck when it comes to remembering important dates.

Not any more! The Power Game 1993 Calendar not only gives you a slot for every day of next year, but each month is tastefully illustrated with scenes from top Nintendo games (see below). For example, January is *Super Mario World*, February is *F-Zero*, April is *Zelda*, and January 1994 (thrown in for luck) is *Pilotwings*. Useful dates also include when Daylight Saving Time begins, George Washington's birthday and Columbus Day, along with the dates of Hanukkah, Martin Luther King Jr Day and Thanksgiving.

The sad news? The Power Game Calendar isn't widely available in the UK. Ours cost £9.95 from Forbidden Planet.



MARIO BECOMES SAFETY WATCHDOG!

The Health and Safety Commission has teamed up with top house builder Beazer Homes and Nintendo for a child safety campaign. Mario is going to be used to warn kids not to play on building sites with the message 'Game over – building sites are dangerous. Mario's got more than one life, you haven't.' Posters with the slogan will be appearing in schools and on Beazer building sites around the country, with a competition offering Nintendo prizes backing the message up.

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BUBBLE GUM CRISIS!

Sküljagger

Revolt Of The Westicans

The things people will do for a piece of orange-flavour bubble gum, eh?

You may have seen this appearing on offer from import companies over the past couple of weeks. It's a pirate platform game, presumably licenced from some sort of American TV cartoon or toy line, though we've never heard of it – little loss, it would appear, since from our first few goes it's less than spectacular stuff. Two odd elements liven up the game a bit though. First, you get a 70-plus page 'novel' with the game, packed with clues to help you get through the game's puzzles, apparently. Second, if your pirate character collects some of the fruit that's lying about, it gets transformed into temporary bubble gum (yes, you read that right) weapons. Cherry lets you fly, orange lets you spit bubble gum grenades, grape makes you invulnerable (encased in a cocoon of bubble gum) and sea lime turns you into a mad bubble gum thing, which whizzes around the screen killing enemies. No space to fit the full review in this issue, we're afraid, so you'll have to wait till next ish.

A black belt in karate is fine – until you meet someone with a very sharp sword.

ALL'S LOUD ON THE STREET FIGHTER II CONTROLLER FRONT!

TOP FIGHTER

by Spectravideo

The clever, but pricy, Topfighter.

In the struggle to keep up with weighty imported game controllers – things like the Capcom Power Fighter – specifically designed for use with arcade-quality games like *Street Fighter II*, British outfit Spectravideo have come up with this, the rival Topfighter. Compatible with Super NES only, it has five-speed slow-motion, assorted heavy duty micro-switches and a neat Action Sequence Memory facility, which allows the player to program his stick so that one fire button press will perform, say, jump, kick and punch in one move – ideal for reliable access to the more complicated fighting moves in *Street Fighter II* every time! There is a price for all this technology though – around £60. Phone Spectravideo on (081) 902 2211 for more details.

CHARTS ACROSS THE WORLD

Every month *Super Play* runs a quartet of charts highlighting the sales of Super Nintendo and Super Famicom games across the world. Now you can see how well your favourites are doing on the global stage...

OFFICIAL PENGUIN GALLUP UK CHARTS

Compiled for *Super Play* by Gallup

1. **STREET FIGHTER II** Capcom
2. **ZELDA III: A LINK TO THE PAST** Nintendo
3. **SUPER WWF WRESTLEMANIA** LJN
4. **JOE & MAC: CAVEMAN NINJA** Elite
5. **TOP GEAR** Nintendo
6. **TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES IV** Konami
7. **SUPER SOCCER** Nintendo
8. **SUPER PROBOTECTOR** Konami
9. **EXHAUST HEAT** Ocean
10. **PILOTWINGS** Nintendo

We hate to say 'told you so', but *Zelda* rockets up to the number two slot, with only the unchallengable *Street Fighter II* bettering it. There too, and new this month, are the fab *Super Probotector*, *Turtles* and *Pilotwings*, but we're surprised to see *UN Squadron* dropping out so early – perhaps it's just taking the month off. Next month, watch out for the now-available-separately *Super Mario World*, as well as a strong showing from *Super Aleste*.

UK IMPORT CHARTS

Compiled for *Super Play* by Console Concepts

1. **STREET FIGHTER II** Capcom (Jap/US)
2. **SUPER MARIO KART** Nintendo (Jap/US)
3. **BART'S NIGHTMARE** Acclaim (US)
4. **DESERT STRIKE** Electronic Arts (US)
5. **AMAXING TENNIS** Absolute Entertainment (US)
6. **WINGS II** Namco (Jap/US)
7. **COSMO GANG** Namco (Jap)
8. **NCAA BASKETBALL** Hal America (US)
9. **IREM SKINS** Irem (US)
10. **JOHN MADDEN '93** Electronic Arts (US)

Events are taking a rather more dramatic turn in the import charts (apart from the top two slots, which are about as surprising as... well, they're not very surprising, anyway). *Axelay* plummets from view, with *Desert Strike* (review next month) replacing it as the top SNES shoot-'em-up. *Bart's Nightmare* seems to be doing well, despite a mixed reception (we loved it, though) and the hot new contenders this month seem to be *Cosmo Gang* and *Amazing Tennis*, reviewed this issue, and *John Madden '93*, which we'll look at next month.

JAPANESE CHARTS

Compiled for *Super Play* by Tai Ono

1. **DRAGON'S QUEST V** Enix
2. **SUPER MARIO KART** Nintendo
3. **STREET FIGHTER II** Capcom
4. **SUPER MARIO WORLD** Nintendo
5. **SUPER DOUBLE DRAGON** Technos
6. **MILITARY BATTLEFIELD** ASCII
7. **MARIO PAINT** Nintendo
8. **COSMO GANG** Namco
9. **SD GUNDAM V** Bandai
10. **SUPER MAH JONG COMPETITION** Koei

Well, what a surprise! *Dragon Quest V* again tops the Jap charts, and looks unassailable – check out our feature on page 60 for more. The *Mario* games and *Street Fighter II* won't surprise anyone, nor should *Double Dragon* (see this ish), *Gundam* or new entry *Cosmo Gang*, but goodness knows about the popularity of *Mah Jong*. (Oh, and Jonathan's getting excited by the sound of a *Military Battlefield* simulator...) (*Not! – JD.*)

AMERICAN CHARTS

Compiled for *Super Play* by Woody Carter

1. **STREET FIGHTER II** Capcom
2. **SUPER MARIO KART** Nintendo
3. **DESERT STRIKE** Electronic Arts
4. **NCAA BASKETBALL** Hal America
5. **AMAZING TENNIS** Absolute Entertainment
6. **WINGS II** Namco
7. **THE IREM SKINS GAME** Irem
8. **SOUL BLAZER** Enix
9. **MARIO PAINT** Nintendo
10. **SUPER DOUBLE DRAGON** Nintendo

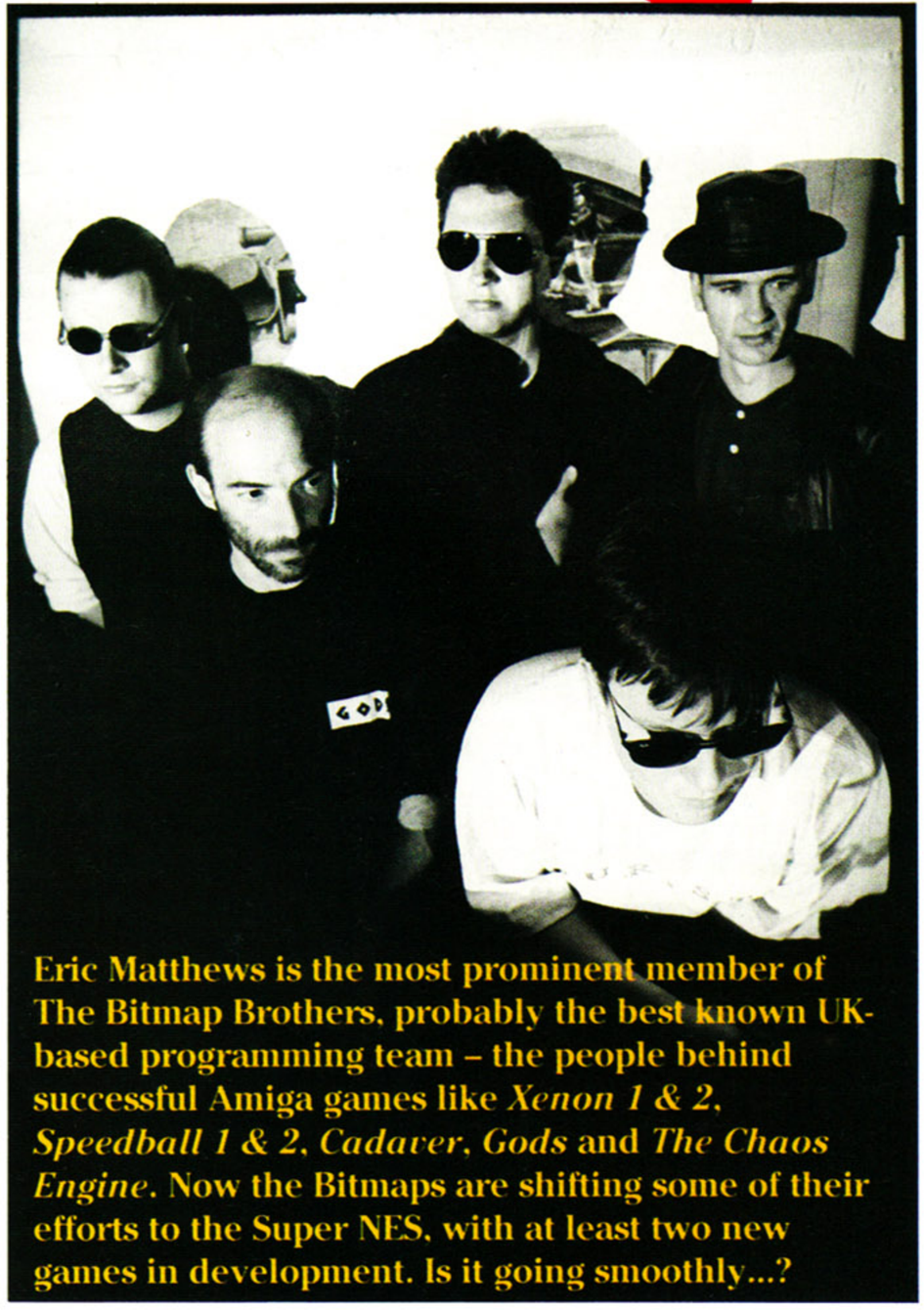
Lots of great games in the US chart this month, many of which are already doing very well on import in this country. We've reviewed nearly all the games in this chart already, and they're generally good. We'll have the two fugitives, *Desert Strike* and *NCAA Basketball*, next issue. Expect the American version of *Mickey Mouse* (the Japanese one's reviewed in this issue) to chart soon too, with *Super Star Wars* hot on its heels.

SUPERPLAY Interview

ERIC MATTHEWS

By Matt Bielby

ANOTHER IN OUR SERIES OF SHORT CHATS WITH SOME OF THE LEADING LIGHTS OF SUPER NES DEVELOPMENT



Eric Matthews is the most prominent member of The Bitmap Brothers, probably the best known UK-based programming team – the people behind successful Amiga games like *Xenon 1 & 2*, *Speedball 1 & 2*, *Cadaver*, *Gods* and *The Chaos Engine*. Now the Bitmaps are shifting some of their efforts to the Super NES, with at least two new games in development. Is it going smoothly...?

Left: Assorted Bitmaps in 'classic' pop star pose. Eric's at bottom right.

Q How did Nintendo react to the SNES version? Was it what they wanted?

A Yes. I think so, anyway! One thing we've learned from Nintendo is the importance of rigorous play-testing. When we'd finished a version we were happy with, we'd submit it to Nintendo Of America, who'd playtest it. We'd get pages and pages of suggested improvements back. One thing Nintendo won't stand for is the possibility that a player might get trapped on a level – there should always be a way forward. To make sure of this, we had to change some of our maps so it wasn't possible for you to put down the world key, say, on top of an inaccessible tower, and then never be able to get back up there to retrieve it.

Q Do you think this current practice of old Amiga games getting revamped for the Super NES is a good thing?

A If you do it right. We spent 10 months totally redoing *Gods* for Nintendo to make it a good SNES game. However, I think we're about to see a number of fairly poor Amiga games appear on the SNES which are basically ports from the old machine. The two systems are so different, you need to rejig it to make it work.

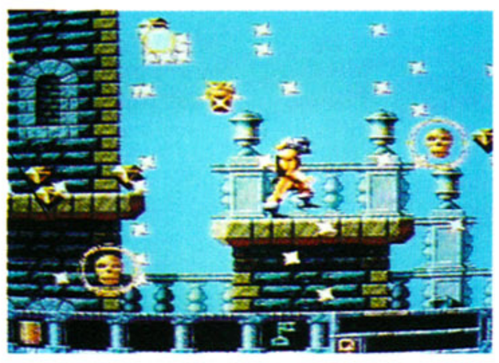
Q Is there any dream project you'd really love to do on Super Nintendo? And any chances of it happening?

A We'd love to do *Speedball 2*, or, rather, a SNES-specific *Speedball 3*, totally reworking the basic idea for the new machine. We haven't so far simply because nobody's asked us – probably because *Speedball 2* is thought of as too old a game, and there were distribution problems with the Genesis version (*American version of the Mega Drive – Ed.*) which meant it didn't sell well. Though we didn't do the Genesis version, I think it's good, with improvements over the original – ie the fact that a different colour palette makes it easier to tell the teams apart. A real *Speedball 3* on the SNES, though would be worth doing.

One of the few known photographs of Eric without his sunglasses. Take a good look - you might not get the chance again.

Q So, Eric, what SNES games are you actually working on?

A We've got *Gods*, which is nearing completion, and we recently started on *The Chaos Engine*. Rob Trevellian, who worked on the Amiga *Speedball 2*, is doing the programming. He's more experienced on the SNES than some of the others here. Also, I think it's good to get someone who'll bring a few fresh ideas to a project when you convert it to another machine, rather than just ask the original programmer to rehash what he's done before.



Gods on Super Nintendo (left) and *The Chaos Engine*, here seen on Amiga but 'soon' for SNES. *Gods*, for one, is now a faster, prettier game than the original Amiga version.

Q So what new ideas has Rob brought to *Gods* then?

A We've changed it quite a lot actually – it's now a faster, more arcade-like game. We spent a week just deciding how to change the controls to take advantage of the extra buttons on a SNES joypad – the game's now a lot less fiddly to play, and you can do things like change direction in mid air, which you couldn't on the Amiga. We've also increased the frame rate to get it faster, and I spent a while mucking about with the possibilities of the SNES colour palette

Q The Bitmap Brothers were the first 'pop star' programmers, pushing their own image alongside the games. Do you think the same thing is about to happen with Super Nintendo programmers?

A I don't think we thought of ourselves as pop stars. It was partly a mickey take, and partly an effort to make the creative people a little more prominent. That's harder to do on Sega and Nintendo, though, where the brand is the most important thing, but I'd still like to think that SNES gameplayers will look out for any new Bitmap Brothers games because they liked the old one. After all, they're the same gameplayers who looked out for our stuff on the Amiga...

***Gods* will be available for the SNES on the Mindscape/Software Toolworks label in January. *The Chaos Engine* should be ready by Autumn.**

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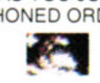
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CD ROM: THE FUTURE

Commodore's CDTV bombed. Philips' CD-I system could be in trouble. Sega's Mega CD lacks decent games. Now Nintendo delays its CD system another six months. Is CD ROM technology really the future of video games?

Right: A speculative drawing of what the CD ROM system for the Super Famicom might look like. It's highly likely that the finished unit will be similar.

Since its introduction in the early '80s, CD technology has quickly become accepted as the norm for many types of media – music in particular. You'd think the notoriously high-tech world of computer and video gaming would be quick to follow, but no – technical difficulties and a dire lack of suitable software has seen CD technology move forward, when it's moved anywhere at all, in a series of fits and bursts.

Certainly Commodore and Philips have had big problems convincing consumers that they really need a computer-based multi-media thingie plugged into their TV, while the dire quality of existing Sega CD software sees the Japanese-market Mega CD currently dead in the water. To anyone familiar with Nintendo business practices, then, it can hardly have come as a surprise when the company announced it was delaying the release of its CD ROM system until August '93 at the earliest. Nintendo has never relied on cutting edge technology – remember how long the NES was forced to soldier on, in direct competition with the superior Mega Drive? – preferring to wait before releasing a new system until the software and the product is *right*. (And, equally, until they're sure there's a massive market for it.)

Nintendo went public with this delay at the Famicom Space World '92 Show last August – it was just one of two major announcements Hiroshi Yamauchi, president of Nintendo in Japan, made concerning the future of the Super Famicom. We told you about the other development last month – the new cartridge based DSP2 chip known as 'Super FX', which will allow the machine greater speed and 3D capabilities. However, it's what the CD delay says about the future of Nintendo CD technology that concerns us here.

NINTENDO VS SEGA: THE TRADITIONAL BATTLELINES ARE DRAWN AGAIN

Players have been waiting for the Super Famicom CD ROM system since the launch of the machine, way back in November 1990. Not surprisingly really, as Nintendo announced the fact that they'd be doing one at the time – a tactic intended to take the wind out of the sails of Sega's much-hyped Mega CD, which was then well into development.

Despite this early announcement, we shouldn't be too surprised that it hasn't happened yet. Nintendo is far too cautious to make the classic mistake Sega have made – its great hardware rendered useless by a complete lack of suitable software, the few games that *have* been released taking virtually no advantage of the system's capabilities. (Indeed, most Sega CD games would have been substandard as cartridge software.)

We expect the Sega Mega CD to occupy a bit of a sales backwater until next Christmas, when decent software eventually arrives, and (more importantly) when the whole CD games market gets a massive boost from the release of the Super Nintendo CD ROM. That's when the battle begins in earnest...

SUPER NINTENDO CD ROM: WHY THE LONG WAIT?

The development of the Super Famicom CD ROM unit has been plagued by more problems than Nintendo would care to admit. The high speed of technological advance in the industry is the main reason – for instance, the proposed specifications for the system had to be revised upwards when Sega unveiled its expensive and sophisticated Mega CD last year. As with the Super NES, Nintendo had to have a significantly better product than Sega if they were once again going to enter the market last.

As a result, at the Nintendo show last August the company claimed to be re-designing the whole unit to offer even more power to games players. Another reason this was needed is the new 'Super FX' cartridge enhancing chip, which will boost the capabilities of the standard SNES performance dangerously close to the dizzy heights the old CD ROM specification offered. A 32-bit chip is now at the heart of the CD unit, boosting its processing capabilities well above this new generation of game cartridges.

The other big reason for the delay involves a serious amount of corporate politics. The original CD ROM development plan was a joint Sony/Nintendo effort – many people expected this to lead to the development of an industry standard. However, things soon went wrong. Sony's own plans with its Super Famicom/CD hybrid, the Play Station, created a rift between the companies, until things reached a point where a new alliance was made with

P.32

Right: Hiroshi Yamauchi, president of Nintendo in Japan, at the Space World show last August.

OF SUPER NES GAMES?

BY JASON BROOKES

CD ROM: THE FAMILY TREE

Understanding the current state of the various proposed and existing CD platforms takes more than a little effort. To try and make things a bit easier for you, then, here's the exclusive *Super Play* CD ROM Family Tree, showing exactly how everything inter-relates...

CD digital audio

Designed by Sony and Philips in the early '80s for storing sound in a digital format. CDs offer a high sound quality and virtually instant access to all the tracks – unlike on a tape or conventional vinyl record.

CD-I

Philips was the first company to release a CD-I (Compact Disc-Interactive) machine in the UK earlier this year. Sony and Panasonic have introduced similar machines in Japan and the US. Rather than being accessories for consoles or computers, CD-I machines are stand-alone units with processing hardware built in. They are capable of full-screen Full-Motion Video (FMV) with text, graphics and audio. It's fairly impressive, fairly expensive – and fairly long in the tooth. The actual format was developed over five years ago.

CD ROM XA

This is Sony's creation, and is currently the proposed platform for the Super Famicom CD ROM system (below). XA stands for eXtended Architecture, meaning extra hardware will have to be included for the simultaneous access of data, video and audio. Sony are to release a CD ROM XA machine called the Play Station (right),which was first announced in mid '91, but hasn't been released anywhere yet. An all-in-one unit, it was initially designed to run Super NES carts as well as special Sony game CDs, but Nintendo wouldn't allow Sony to make it Nintendo CD compatible. However, this appears to have changed now that Sony have recently tied up again with Nintendo, with the Play Station being allowed to run Super Famicom/Super NES CDs too. (In this it will be much the same as JVC's 'Wondermega' machine, which crossed a Mega Drive with a CD ROM player.) Both cartridge and CD software will be compatible across the Sony Play Station and the Super Famicom CD ROM formats – which one you buy will be purely a matter of taste. Nintendo is continuing to work with Philips to develop a CD ROM XA 'bridge-format' which will make Nintendo CD software compatible with Philips CD-I hardware.

CD ROM

The first CD ROM was produced by IBM for use with MS-DOS standard PCs. Since then, various manufacturers have utilised CD ROM technology to improve the existing capabilities of their particular system. Various companies make CD ROM drives for use with PCs, and NEC and Sega already have units on the market for use with their own consoles.

PC CD ROM

Currently the PC has a wide variety of CD ROM drives available, with a rapidly increasing software base. To ensure compatibility across the board, PC CD ROM units are very similar to standard audio CD drives – great for mass storage, but quite slow at data retrieval. However, with PCs relying on high density hard drive storage, CDs obviously solve all the disc-swapping problems you traditionally get with graphically intensive games like *Monkey Island II* etc.

NEC PC Engine CD ROM

The first CD ROM unit ever released for a console was for the NEC PC Engine, way back in '88 in Japan. Since then, new CD versions of the Engine have appeared – the smaller, clip-on Super CD (above), and the all-in-one Duo (this was released in Japan one day after the Mega CD, and has sold far better). Both systems have improved CD drives and extra memory to cope with new Super CD software and music CDs with graphics (CD-G).

Sega Mega CD / JVC Wondermega

Released in Japan last December, the Mega CD initially sold very well, but Sega-Japan have had a terrible year. Software is still very poor and thin on the ground – Sega jumped the gun with this one,though it's certainly a system with great potential. Last month the American version was launched (under the name 'Sega CD'), but UK players will have to wait until next spring for the UK machine. The JVC Wondermega (above) is a redesigned combo unit that plays both MD carts and Mega CDs.

Commodore Amiga CDTV

Launched in May '91, Commodore's CDTV was initially presented as a home multi media station, keeping its Amiga origins well hidden. When this bombed (due to the high price and poor software), it was relaunched this year as the Amiga CDTV, with keyboard and disk drive pack turning it into a swish looking black Amiga with built in CD drive.

Can it be true? It's... a pic of a Super Famicom and a... CD!!!

Philips to develop the unit instead. New specifications were released at the Las Vegas CES in January 1991.

But since then a lot has happened. On 1 October 1992 Nintendo announced a revised deal with Sony, taking the project back to them. The new system is now said to be fully compatible with the Play Station – this way Nintendo benefits from Sony's expertise in compact disc technology, while Sony gets a chance to unleash a video games machine with a huge potential market. It's not unlike JVC's involvement with Sega and the Wondermega (see the CD Family Tree).

The third reason for the delay you've probably guessed by now – a lack of good software. Commented electronics analyst Chuck Goto at SG Warburg in Tokyo, 'Nintendo is still trying to figure out how to use the massive storage capacity of the CD ROM to create effective games.'

Additional details, however, are scarce. Sony aren't talking, while Nintendo have gone on record saying that the system may not even be launched next year if suitable games aren't ready.

Don't hold your breath waiting for the CD ROM system. However, *do* expect it to be stunning when it eventually appears – the technology is there, the talent certainly is and Super Scope aside, Nintendo have yet to release something that wasn't worth waiting for. Sega know this more than anyone.

SO WHAT CAN CD ROM ACTUALLY DO?

The exact specifications of Nintendo's newest baby are unclear, but here's the best of recent speculation...

These are the most up-to-date details of Nintendo's forthcoming CD ROM system, though they're subject to change. A schematic diagram from early '92 revealed the inclusion of a custom co-processor running at 21MHz, working alongside the SNES' normal three speed (and very slow!) processor. The co-processor has since been revealed to be a 32-bit unit (see diagram) – this has the potential to make CD ROM a real improvement over cartridges.

Indeed, the whole set up is now nearly twice as powerful as a standard SNES running a game on one of the new 'Super FX' cartridges, which include their own Digital Signal Processor. This degree of difference is deemed necessary if Nintendo is going to attract enough people to the new machine to make it the success they've come to expect...

● **More on the Super FX next issue.**

PANASONIC'S INTO CD GAMES TOO!

Sony and Nintendo are not the only companies around who have CD games systems still in development.

Panasonic/Taito

Although Panasonic already has CD-I systems available in Japan and the States, it has recently teamed up with top arcade game producer Taito to produce a dedicated CD games machine provisionally titled the 'Wowow' (don't ask us why). The cult shoot-'em-up *Sagaia* (also known as*Darius II*) and *Rainbow Islands* were both demonstrated on the system last year in Tokyo, but nothing has been heard or seen of either games or system since then. Could other coin-op manufacturers be planning on bringing out CD machines, too? Only time will tell.

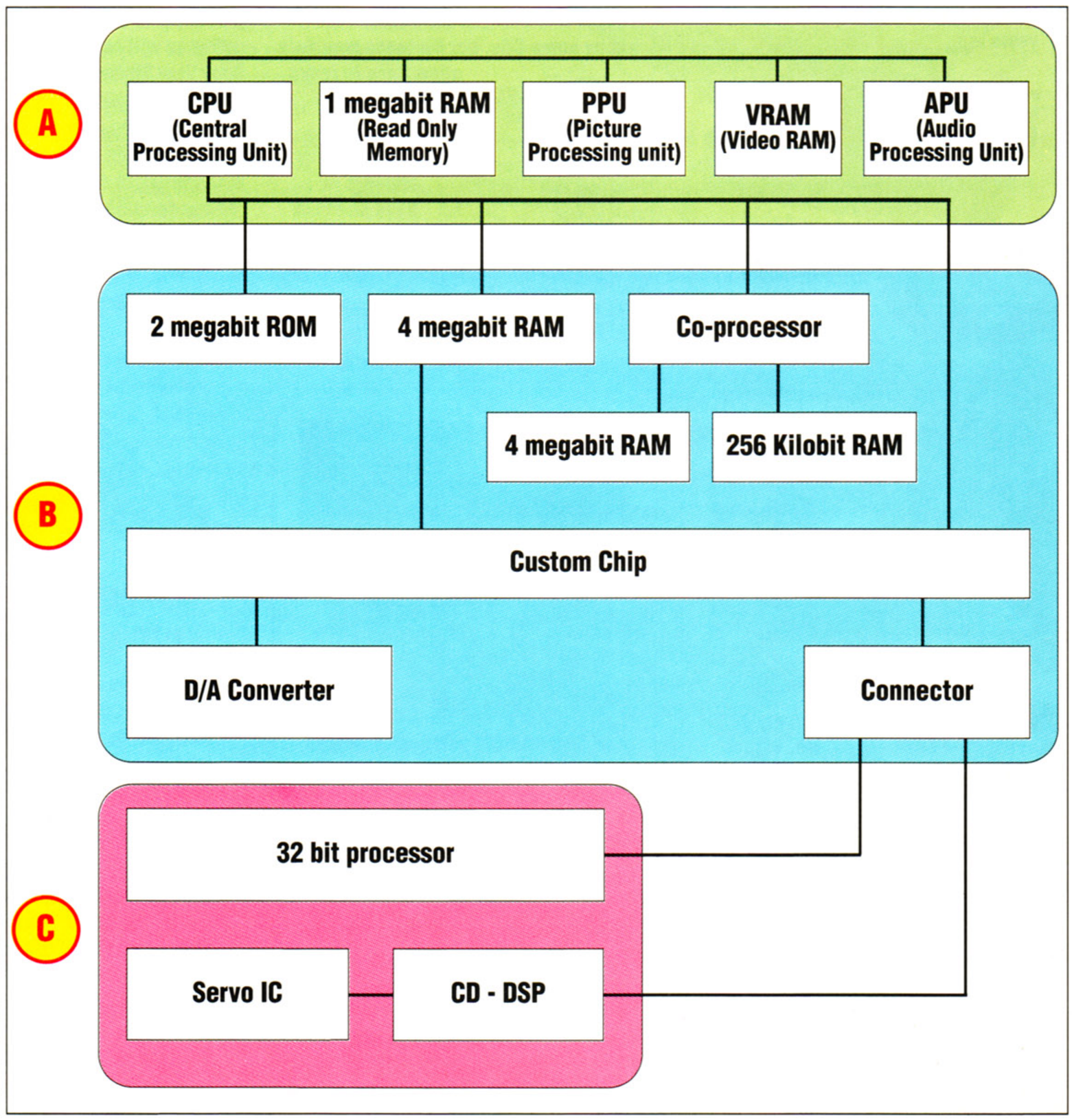
The shape of things to come? Panasonic/ Taito are developing this rather oddly named CD games machine.

Opposite we have the latest version of the proposed schematic (technical layout) for the Super Famicom CD ROM system. These details are speculative and could change significantly.

A This is the Super Famicom or Super Nintendo. As there is only 1 megabit or 128k RAM in the machine, most of the memory (for CD data to be loaded into) will be included in the system control cartridge or perhaps - if changes are made - in the CD unit itself.

B The system cartridge that plugs into the normal Super Famicom/Super NES cart slot. This acts as an interface between the console and the CD ROM unit. At the moment it's unclear if the co-processor will be a DSP.

C The CD ROM unit system with 32-bit processor now included. A DSP chip is a possibility here, too.



Right: Just one of the many different forms the CD ROM drive might take. We can't wait!

Left: *The 7th Guest* by Virgin - a creepy murder/ghost story set in a haunted house. Dare you risk the food being served in the dining room?
Below: Just look at these graphics. The *7th Guest* offers a sound night's rest - providing you don't make the mistake of going to sleep!

Okay, they're PC screen shots, but remember, the SNES can display just as many colours.

SNES CD ROM: SO, WHAT WILL THE GAMES BE LIKE?

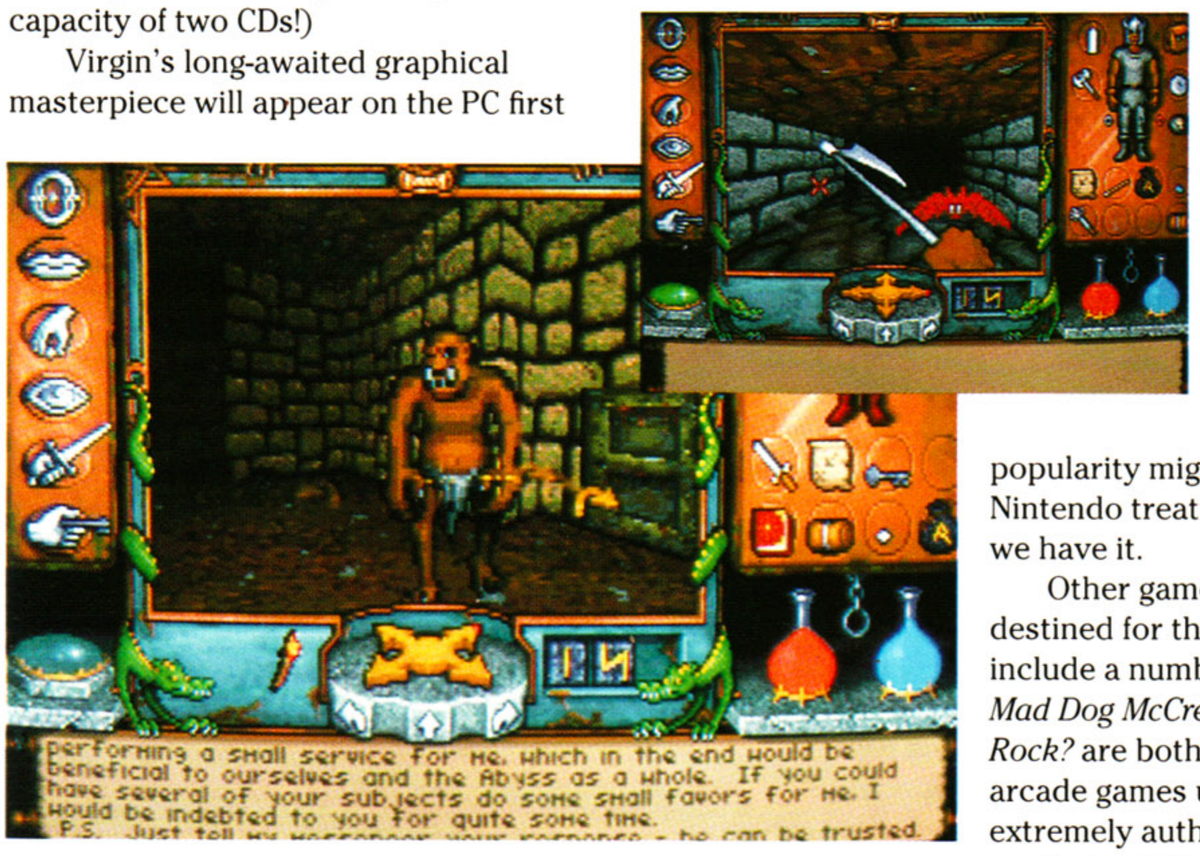
Okay, we've established that the most important part of the equation for a successful CD system is Good Software. So what sort of Good Software will we get for the Super NES/Super Famicom CD ROM? Eh? Eh?

Erm, this is tricky. Here's the latest news of confirmed games, with plenty of speculation about what else might be possible thrown in.

One of the first games expected for the Super Famicom CD ROM is called The *7th Guest*, it's from Virgin and looks set to become one of the scariest games ever (see above pics). It's such an unusual game because the graphics have all been cleverly rendered on computers, not unlike some of the impressive special effects you can see in the latest television commercials.

Rest assured, this won't just provide *Dragon's Lair*-style sit-back-and-watch gameplay – instead the game allows full interaction and freedom of movement, all the possible angles from which the scenery and objects can be viewed having already been calculated and beautifully displayed in 256 colours, with extremely realistic shading and special morphing effects, too. This is certainly one effective way to make good use of the additional space you get on a CD. (In fact, all this data takes up over 1,000 megabytes, or 8,000 megabits, of memory and currently uses up the capacity of two CDs!)

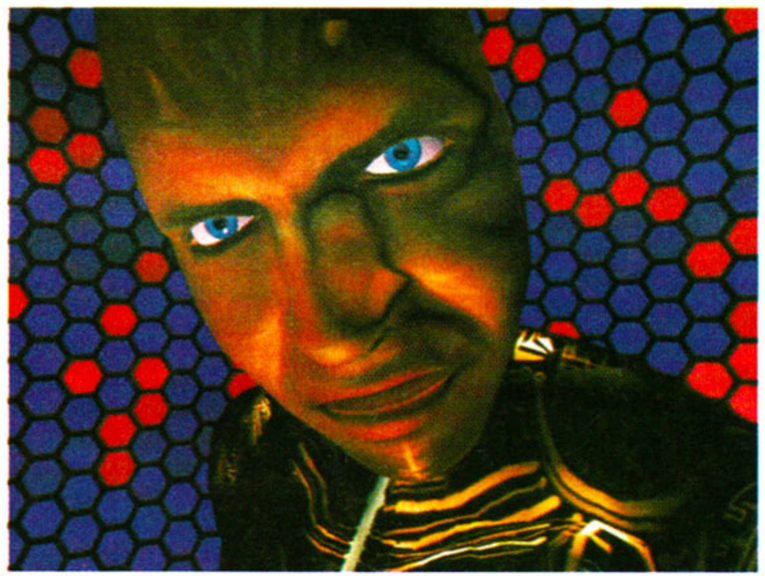
Virgin's long-awaited graphical masterpiece will appear on the PC first (due next year), and was originally scheduled for release with the Super NES version of the CD ROM in the States in January 1993. However, the previous specification of the system simply wasn't sufficient to cope with the graphics – something the new, uprated, CD ROM specification should change with a bit of luck. Certainly, from what we've seen of the PC version, this could prove to be one of the most stunning games ever.



Above and above right: Origin's classic RPG game *Ultima Underworld* on the PC. Electronic Arts' recent purchase of Origin should secure its future as a potential SNES CD ROM release.

While we're on the subject of PC games, the landmark role playing game *Ultima Underworld* could soon be scheduled for Super Nintendo CD ROM conversion too. Sega already have it in development for their Mega CD, but it's popularity might guarantee it the Nintendo treatment. More info when we have it.

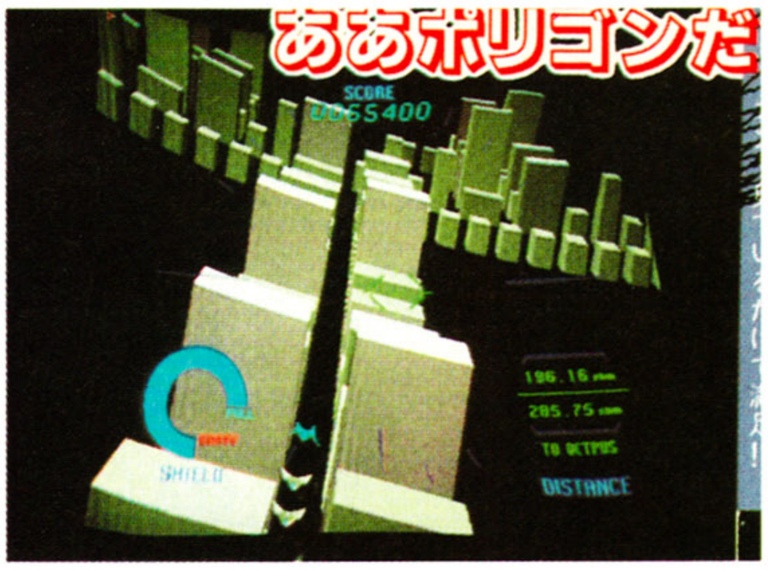
Other games already in existence destined for the Super Nintendo CD include a number of laser disc games. *Mad Dog McCree* and *Who Shot Johnny Rock?* are both fabulous shoot-'em-up arcade games using live actors and extremely authentic settings. The producer of the games, ALG (American Laser Games), recently signed an agreement with Nintendo to develop similar titles for the CD ROM platform. However, full or partial motion video on the system will have to be possible to do these games any justice.



The Lawnmower Man - just one of the CD ROM titles set to appear on the SNES CD ROM.

Storm, the developer of *Super SWIV*, is currently developing a SNES CD ROM game based around the popular film *The Lawnmower Man*. Naturally, the coding of the SNES version won't be started until the final spec of the unit is known, but the source material, such as digital footage and 3D model data, is worked on using high-end PCs. The movie footage is being grabbed in 24-bit colours and will be converted and slotted into the SNES version when the development system is available.

Nintendo's own product line up is just as secret as ever, unfortunately. This, of course, just fuels the speculation. Much rumoured is ancient classic *Donkey Kong*, the first game Mario ever appeared in, which was first announced as a Super Nintendo CD ROM/



A perfect copy of *Starblade* on CD? Dream on. A similar game *is* scheduled to appear though.

Konami's first choices for the CD ROM are rumoured to include the impressive *Hexen*.

If *Hexen* does appear, let's hope they include some improved gameplay, eh? The original had a very weedy weapons system, after all.

Philips CD-I crossover product. The more familiar *Mario* and *Zelda* series are inevitable candidates for this treatment, too.

Sequels to *Pilotwings* and *F-Zero*, using both polygon graphics and Mode 7, are supposedly both on the cards, though the likelihood is that they'll appear as cartridge games using the new Special FX chip, rather than on CD ROM. Rest assured, however, that whatever Nintendo have planned for release with the CD ROM, it's going to be something special – Nintendo will be taking no risks with this system.

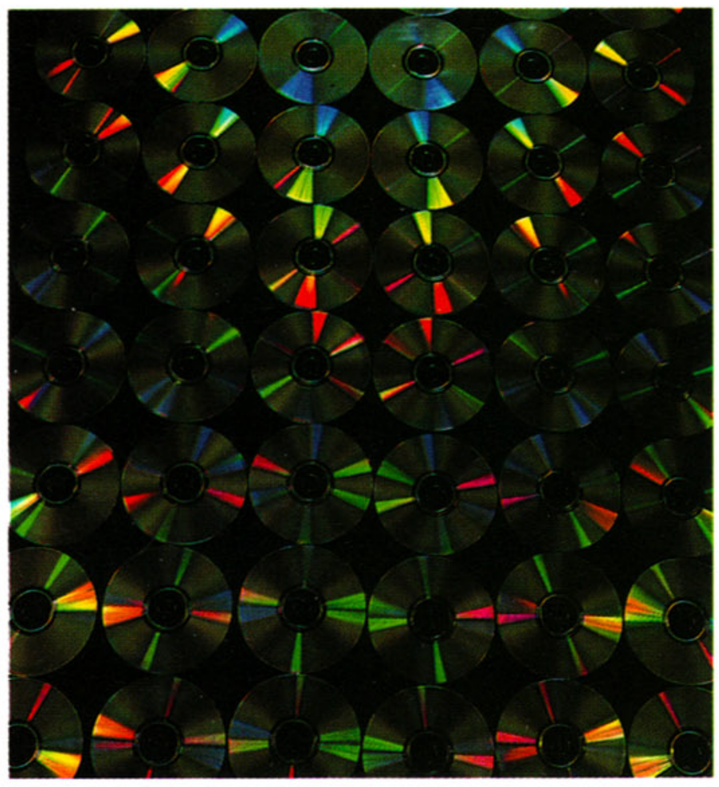
And what of the other top creators? Well, Konami has already shown a commitment to CD ROM, with a fabulous cyberpunk adventure called *Snatcher* recently released in Japan on the PC Engine Super CD ROM. Some of Konami's top Super Nintendo programmers were moved last year to a new development centre to concentrate their efforts on CD technology, so expect some stuff from them. We think a revamped version of the *Xexex* coin-op (complete with all its gorgeous intermission animations), an ultra-impressive *Axelay 2*, and, quite possibly, *Castlevania V* are also likely candidates.

Capcom are guaranteed to provide some CD thrills. A popular rumour at the moment is that *Street Fighter II: The Champion Edition* will appear on CD, shortly after the Mega Drive cartridge version. However, we're not convinced – if a game's due to appear on the ordinary Mega Drive next March, surely Nintendo won't deem it good enough for their CD?

And beyond that it's pure speculation. Rest assured that at least some of these games will be absolutely spectacular, and some will be big names too. (*Star Trek: The Next Generation* from Spectrum Holobyte is promised, for instance.) Don't worry about missing out on any hot info, though. *Super Play* will keep you posted on any new developments as soon as we hear about them.

Watch this space...

HOW DOES A CD WORK? IT'S SIMPLE...



If you look closely at these CDs - you may have to squint a bit - you should be able to see hundreds of tiny little pits on the surface (*Right. That's it. You're sacked- Ed.*)

You all know what a CD looks like, of course – a small, shiny, metallic disk, not unlike a conventional vinyl record. The way it works is very different, though...

- While on vinyl records the needle works from the outside towards the centre, CDs work in exactly the opposite way.
- Only one side of the CD is used, not both, as is the case with traditional records.
- The head of the CD player reads the CD by projecting light onto it, then reading the reflected messages from pits made on the surface of the CD. These can either be a 0 or a 1, the binary system that should be familiar to all computer users.
- The pits on a CD surface are 1.6 millionths of a metre wide and 0.9 millionths of a metre long – pretty damn difficult to measure with your average ruler.
- Normal CD ROM systems are suitable for computer data, sound data and video data, though sound data is recorded on a different track. (Philips' CD-I, however, is different – the three signals are put on the same track.)
- Normal CDs cannot be recorded onto or erased from – what you buy is exactly what you get. Therefore, for instance, you can't save game data onto a compact disc.
- The way CD ROM systems for consoles work is that they read the computer and visual data from the disc, then store them in the unit's RAM for processing by the machine.
- The important thing about CDs for game players is the potential size of a game – a CDs memory capacity is massive. It's 540 Megabytes – 4,320 Megabits in cartridge terms (about 270 times the size of *Street Fighter II*!)
- There's another huge advantage CDs have over conventional storage methods – the high speed random access of information.
- And, finally, there's the fact that, next to other storage methods, CDs are incredibly fast, easy and cheap to make. How easy? See below...

HOW IS A CD MADE? EVEN SIMPLER...

Bet you always wondered just how CDs were made, didn't you? No? Well we're going to tell you anyway. (Don't worry, it won't take too long...)

Step 1
Make a Master CD out of glass, using lasers to carve out the tiny pits.

Step 2
Now coat the glass with a thin layer of metal and you have your Master CD.

Step 3
From this Master, a nickel stamping plate has to be made.

Step 4
Using this nickel plate, CDs are then pressed out of plastic. The process is quick and easy, each CD (after all) ony having one piece.

Step 5
A layer of reflective aluminium compound is then added to each one.

Step 6
A final layer of plastic is added to complete the process. Voila! One CD.

Doesn't sound that hard, does it? And, indeed, it isn't – the CD manufacturing process is cheap and easy (hence all the people who get annoyed at the high price of music CDs in the UK.) Indeed, CDs are *so* much cheaper to manufacture than carts that we should see a significant price drop for games as they take off – that old 'cartridges are expensive to make' argument goes straight out of the window. (Of course, we all know how likely *that* is to happen, don't we..?)

Nintendo's HQ in Japan. Hands up who'd like to be a fly on the wall in this little pile?

New. For your SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM New. For your SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM New. For your

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES IV
TURTLES IN TIME™

The ever villainous Shredder has sent one of his evil androids to steal the Statue of Liberty. The turtles have to defeat Shredder and rescue Lady Liberty from his evil clutches in six huge levels of Arcade Action. As they attempt to put an end to Shredder he knocks everyone into an activated Matrix Translocation Beam sending everyone hurtling back through time. Can the turtles defeat the host of historic hooligans as they fight their way back to 1992, to the final showdown with Shredder.

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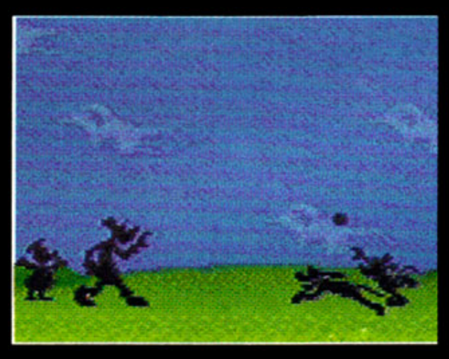
MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST

Japanese Release

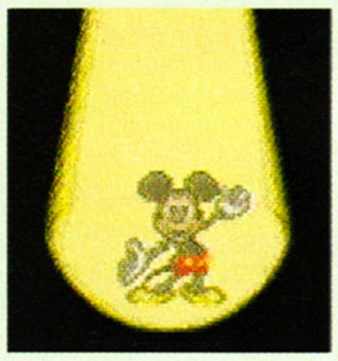
Game: Mickey's Magical Quest
Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom in-house
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Japan: out now/US: December/UK: tba
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

A quick check around the office revealed very few Mickey fans, with the sole exception of Jason. He remembered how great Sega's Mickey game, *Castle Of Illusion*, was a couple of years ago, and hoped some of that same magic would appear here. It did...

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO PLUTO? MICKEY'S ON THE CASE...



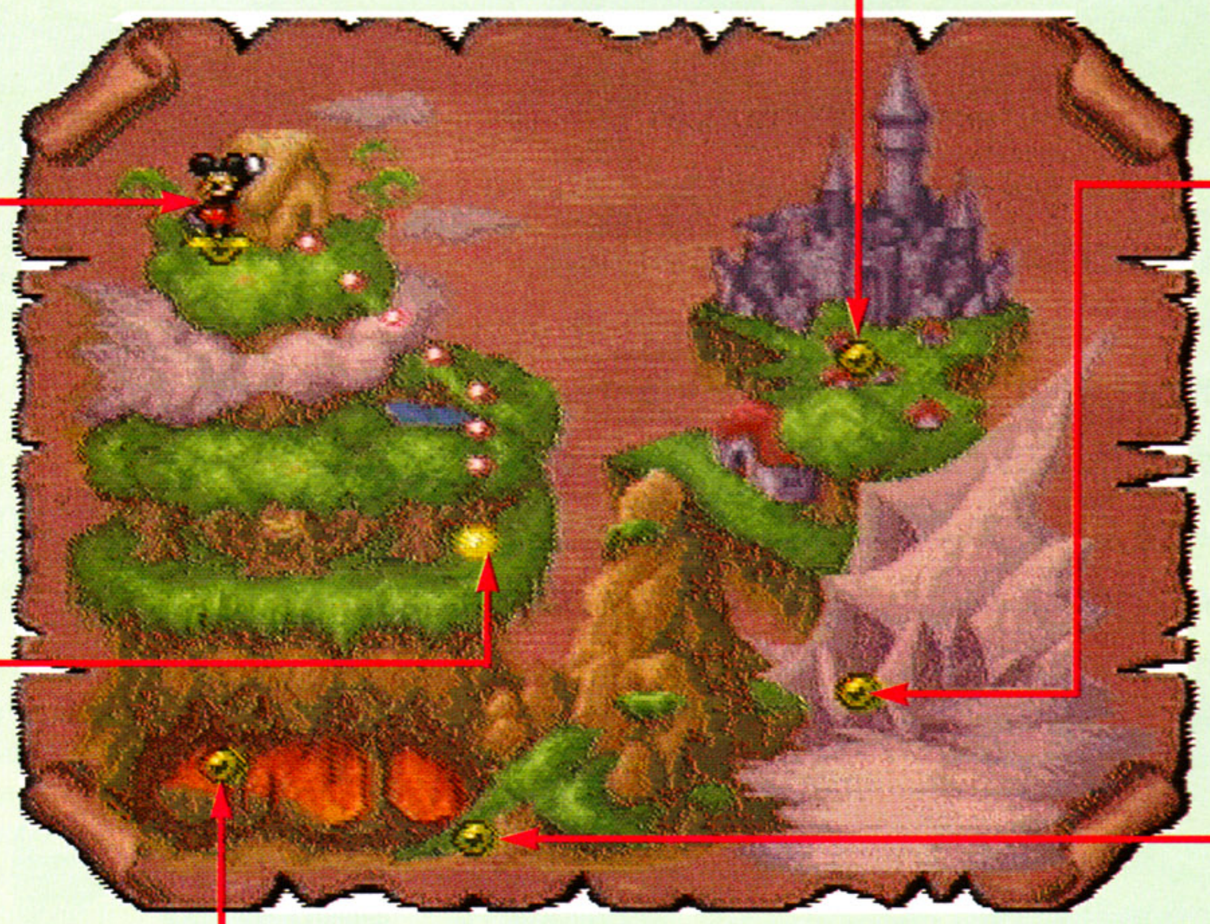
Goofy pitches at Mickey, and overshoots! Pluto rushes past to retrieve the ball, but mysteriously disappears – so Mickey chases after him, but falls over a cliff, landing in evil Emperor Pete's garden...



At first glance, ignoring the baseball bit for a minute, this game doesn't look that different from the Sega Mega Drive release *Castle Of Illusion* – both are set in very similar looking forests and castles. In *Mickey's Magical Quest* each level is divided into four sections – three main ones and a boss level. There's usually a mid-level boss to deal with, too.

LEVEL SIX: EMPEROR PETE'S CASTLE!
And finally, here's Emperor Pete's castle, where Pluto is being held. The game hasn't been that hard up till now, but things get a little tougher once you enter here.

LEVEL ONE: THE GIANT BEANSTALK
Mickey has to fly if he's to get all the special bonuses on level one.



LEVEL FIVE: THE ICE WORLD
Short, but with a boss that'll have you in fits of laughter.

LEVEL TWO: TO THE WOODS!
It's dark here, and things start getting a little creepy and very weird – at one point the jumping-from-branch-to-branch action switches to an underwater bit, set inside a massive tree.

LEVEL THREE: GOING DOWN
This bit's rather like level three in the Capcom coin-op *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, if you remember that, as Mickey takes a lift down a vertically scrolling canyon. The temperature starts going up, but Mickey's got a new suit to protect him.

LEVEL FOUR: THE FIRE MOUNTAINS
Possibly the best level of them all. As Mickey makes his way up into the mountains, he scales sheer rock faces and swings across gaping holes.

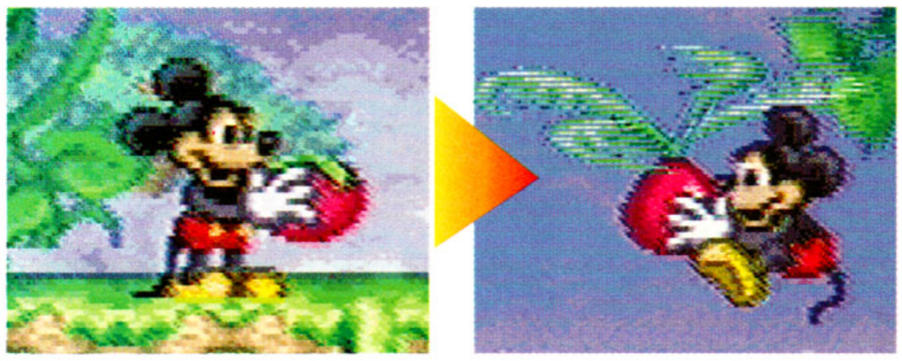
Right: Yep, afraid Mickey's come a cropper, and is looking a bit perplexed. This beanstalk bit is on the pretty side, isn't it? (And even better when you can see the rather lovely parallax scrolling, though I'm afraid you're just going to have to take my word for it.) When Mickey jumps on certain baddies they shout 'Pause' (presumably some kind of critter talk). (*Nice try – Ed.*)

Left: These old codgers give you valuable advice on how to get through the game. (As if you need it!)

Right: Dotted around the levels are lots of these secret rooms, packed with all sorts of useful things like money and, er, fruit. (Bloody fruit – don't know why you're supposed to be so keen on collecting it in games. Give me the readies any day.)

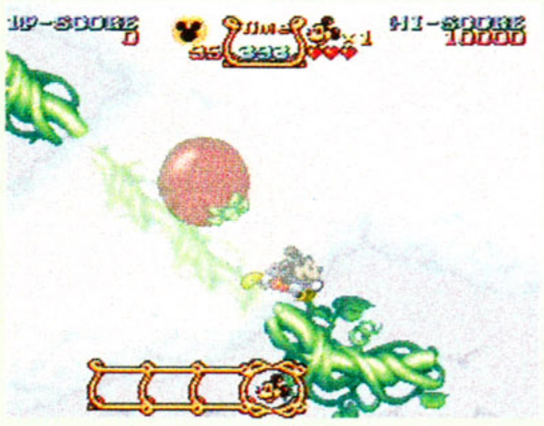
NEAT TRICKS AND NIFTY TACTICS

Mickey's Magical Quest is packed with neat gameplay moments to make you smile, these being my favourites...
Right: In order to get to the bonuses up in the sky, Mickey first has to grab a tomato. A quick spin, and the leaves act like a helicopter's rotors so the tomato rises up fast. Mickey grabs hold of it, and it's up, up and away...



Bonus boxes are scattered around the six different landscapes. Grab the ring that hangs beneath each one and pull to release the contents.

Jump up and grab these blocks from the sky, then throw them spinning at the leaf men and the blue hunter. They'll be knocked flying!



Above: Mickey is supposed to be riding that tomato to avoid the thorny bits of the beanstalk. Looks like something went slightly wrong...

Watch out, you're about to be splattered by a giant tomato! This bit's reminiscent of a scene in *Castle Of Illusion*, although Sega used a giant apple instead...

The first mid-level boss, a bizarre looking mutant bat thing: just when you thought you'd killed it, it hangs upside down and has babies which come after you.

MICKEY'S PAST

Mickey's Magical Quest may be his first outing on the SNES, but he's appeared in loads of other console games, the most memorable being the excellent *Castle Of Illusion* on the Mega Drive. Though not the same game, they have a lot in common – *Magical Quest* is better looking (but the Sega game's no slouch in this department either), while *Castle* is more challenging. (They're both too easy, however.) Quite possibly Disney specified that they *wanted* them easy, so Mickey's younger fans wouldn't get too frustrated, in which case maybe we'd better let the creators off...

TOO LOVABLE TO KILL

Some of the baddies in *Magical Quest* are so cute and cuddly looking it's a real shame you have to blow them away. Here are a handful of our favourites, just so you're prepared for their little tricks when you meet them...

LEAF MEN
Disgustingly cute, this little chap falls from the trees in the forest area like a deceptively harmless leaf. A quick jump on his head, however, results in the tantrum he's having here.

GIANT BEE
He's really lethal, this guy. Whatever you do, when you jump on him, make sure that you give his nasty sting a very wide berth.

STEPPING STONE FROG
Hard to believe these are baddies, isn't it? Luckily for Mickey, their heads are great to jump on – you can happily use them as stepping stones to get across the river.

BLUE HUNTER
This is one of the first baddies to appear on the beanstalk. Smart, isn't he? Just watch out for his stick...

BEAVER PATROL
These guys swim around in the water on level two. Like the rest of the baddies, one touch strips the energy from you like there's no tomorrow.

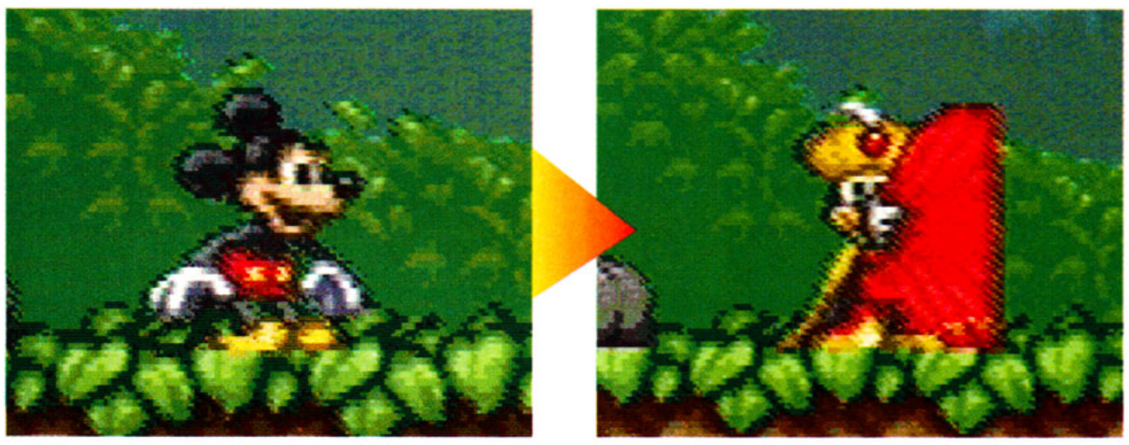
The first proper boss is a bit special. Jump on his head, and he releases a segment of his body that you can pick up and chuck back at him! Which is very satisfying once you manage it – it's not that easy at first.

Hmm... another bit quite like *Castle of Illusion*. Well, to be fair it's not *that* similar. Mickey must jump from leaf to leaf as they flutter to the ground.

The Dark Forest is full of the kind of trees that nightmares are made of. You know, the ones with big ugly, scary faces that look like they're just waiting until it's dark to grab you with their gnarled branches and drag... (*Enough! – Ed.*)

With his magician's outfit on, Mickey can swim in the sap of this tree (avoiding those crab-like insect things). A bubble appears around his head containing his personal air supply.

MICKEY'S EMPORIUM



Probably the best feature in the whole game is this little curtain that Mickey draws across while changing outfits. Oh sorry, did I forget to mention that he has three different guises? (See below.)

My favourite – Mickey the climber, complete with grappling hook and feathered cap and fabulous gameplay, too. I love this shot of him swinging from a floating block. Note the rather wonderful nest in the background.

Mickey the (rather splendid) magician can fire magic bolts and, as mentioned, swim underwater without drowning.

More original gameplay features with this fireman's outfit – a water hose pushes obstacles out of the way.

Far left: A giant rotating spider traps Mickey with its web at the end of level two. Like most bosses, this one can be disposed of quite easily, once you've learnt his attack patterns.

Above left: This lift takes Mickey down into the fiery abyss that is level three. As if that wasn't enough, Mickey's fire-fighting abilities are pushed to the limit.

Left: Those yellow blocks reveal a secret room with er... apples and things inside... (Or was it coins?)

Hurray, it's level four, and it's absolutely fab. Goofy appears at this point and presents Mickey with some handy climbing gear, which includes a grappling hook and a rather natty feathered Alpine cap.

Fans of *Bionic Commando* (and Amiga *Batman*)-style gameplay will adore level four's swinging-around-and-generally-climbing-about action. After the first three sub-stages, Mickey comes face-to-face with a very large hungry bird.

Probably the briefest of the lot, level five is a slippery slidy ride through the snow. Mickey slides along on what look like a Fox's Glacier mint! The best thing about this level is the wonderful boss at the end – a cuddly rotating walrus-type critter that really takes some beating.

Here we are at the castle on level six: Mickey the fireman pushes a block with his water jet so he can use it to jump up onto the next level – just one example of the versatile gameplay tricks just waiting to be discovered.

Mickey's trying out his magic, before attempting to rescue Pluto from the clutches of evil Emperor Pete.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

I was so excited when this game came into this office, I forgot to order my double-sized bacon sarnie breakfast – something I normally take *very* seriously. Indeed, this is so good I played it right through lunch-time too – when you're having this much fun with a game, little things like eating hardly seem to matter. Make no mistake, this is a gorgeous game, and one I insisted on showing off to everybody at the slightest opportunity. (*I'll vouch for that. I can't tell you how irritating Jason was while reviewing this – he was forever dragging us over to look at the damn thing with words like "Wow! look at that sprite there, the one with its feet in the air. Great, eh?" One thing's for sure – this is the last cute game he gets to review... - Ed.*)

You see, I couldn't help it. This game looks so nice you just want to share it with everybody. After all, if you can take the people we've spoken to as any guide, Capcom is nearly everyone's favourite games company – to the extent that a major release from them is almost bound to do well. And they deserve to, if they can keep up the standards like this. While we can't guarantee that Mickey's Magical Quest will keep you occupied for as long as *Street Fighter II*, say, you'll get as much fun out of it while it lasts. This is an exceptionally well crafted game.

The nice thing is that looks aren't all *Mickey's Magical Quest* has going for it. It scores highly in gameplay too, and is far more original than I'd expected. The basic Mickey can turn tomatoes into helicopters, and throw and pull things, but the various outfits he acquires on his travels give the game the kind of depth usually only associated with Mario.

But it's the beauty of it all that puts this game in the super league – it couples some of the most radiant and colourful graphics yet seen on the SNES with some of the greatest sprite designs on any system. Sonically it's all a bit dreamy too. While there isn't quite the range of catchy themes as to be found in *Castle Of Illusion*, what's here is extremely impressive and enjoyable. Perhaps I should just say that the music does justice to the original Disney cartoons.

Of course, you know what's coming now, don't you. That's right – the dreaded 'but.' What lets Mickey down is something that's becoming a real worry with new games – it's just too easy. Mega Drive games are plagued by this problem, of course, but it's starting to look like the disease is spreading over into our neck of the woods, too. Great graphics are all very well – and like I said, these are glorious – but you also need consistently challenging gameplay. This stuff's fun, and inventive, and varied – but you'll romp through it.

So how easy is this? Well, I completed *Mickey's Magical Quest* in a matter of hours on the Normal setting, not the Easy one. Sure, it's not without its tricky bits, but no game's so difficult that infinite continues (which is what you get here) can't get you through it. Time was when we used to find ourselves complaining that not enough continues and restart points were put into games, but now everything seems to have swung the other way. In its defence, Mickey has almost certainly been aimed at a slightly younger audience than most games, but even so...

Is it worth buying, then?. In this case that's a tricky one to answer. The best guide I can give is this: If you're the emotional equivalent of a brick wall when it comes to cute games (ie you're too macho to enjoy them, which is your loss), then my advice is to give it a miss – you wouldn't appreciate it. If, however, you appreciate the finer things in life, and (perhaps more importantly, you've got enough money to throw around that you don't need to get two months of gameplay out of every game), then this is a must. It is, quite simply, another classic from Capcom, which is exactly what we've come to expect.

● Jason Brookes

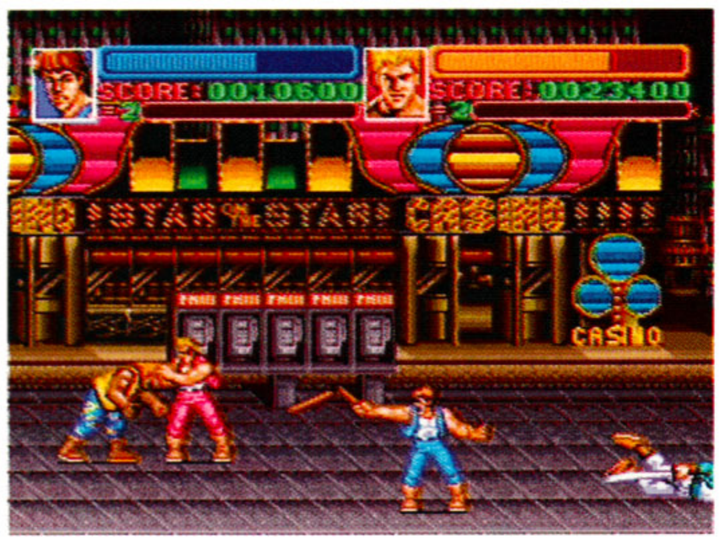
GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
95%	91%	92%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
78%	89%	

VERDICT: Gorgeous graphics, lovely sprites, bags of character – and far too easy. But I still love it to bits. Once again, pure quality from Capcom, make no mistake about it.

SUPER DOUBLE DRAGON

Japanese/US Release

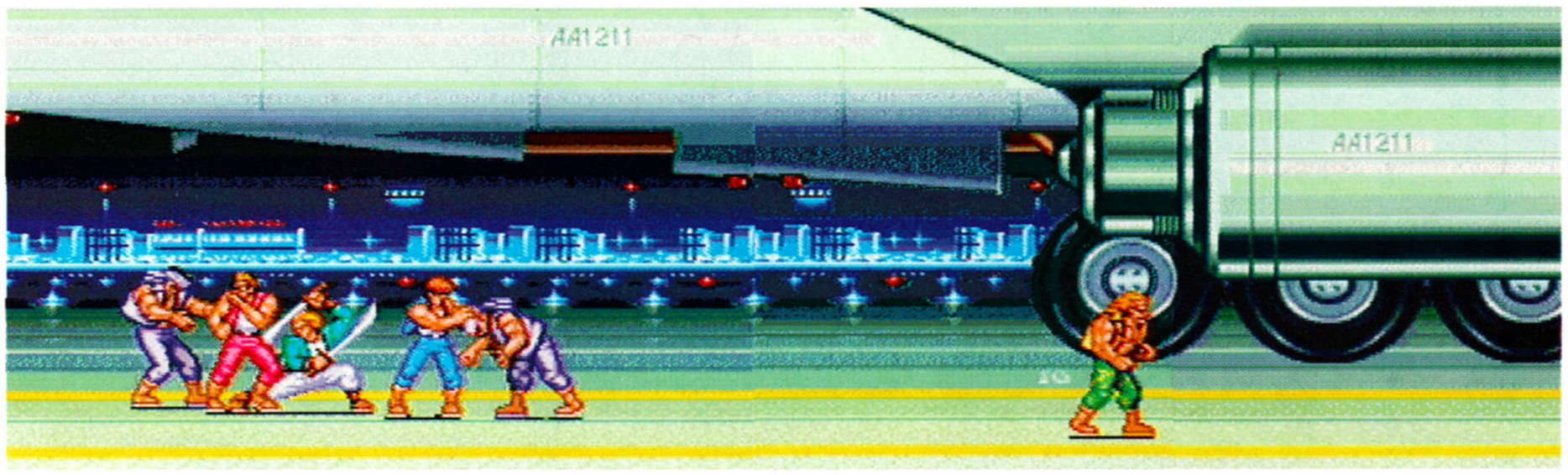
Game: Super Double Dragon
Publisher: Technos
Developer: In-house
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Available now
Players: 1 or 2 players
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



Billy and Jimmy take on the Black Shadow boys.

Dive for cover! It's yet another beat-'em-up on the Super Nintendo! Stay down! It's yet another average game with a token 'super' tagged onto the front! Oh... go on then, have a peep, it's not completely awful, it *is Double Dragon* after all. (*So, you're saying it's absolutely terrible then – Ed*?)

Billy and Jimmy Lee are renegade martial arts experts – make no mistake about it. However, nothing will hinder their progress more than having Matt controlling one of them – it's a veritable suicide mission and he'll use up all of the game's five credits while you're still on your first energy bar. Unless you're playing with a pro, you'll get further into the seven stages on your own.



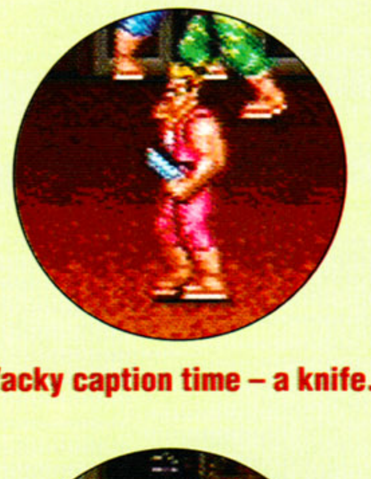
Level two includes this scroll-along-an-airport-runway section. It's probably the only decent one graphically, but it's a shame you can't get on the plane and duff up the stewards – a missed opportunity if ever I saw one.

LETHAL WEAPONS

A Konbo stick to whack people.

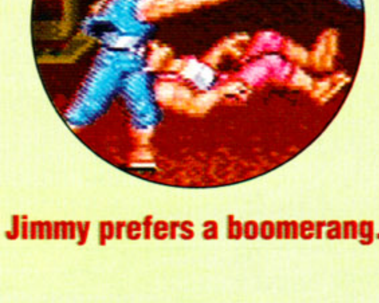
Nunchakus *are* spelt like this.

Get them over a barrel.



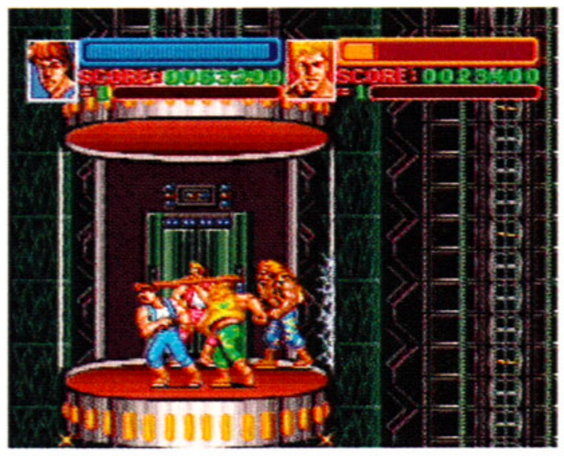
Wacky caption time – a knife.

An exploding fire bomb for Billy.



Jimmy prefers a boomerang.

Super Double Dragon has one or two nice touches. Wack this punchball and kill those baddies. (And yourself, too.)

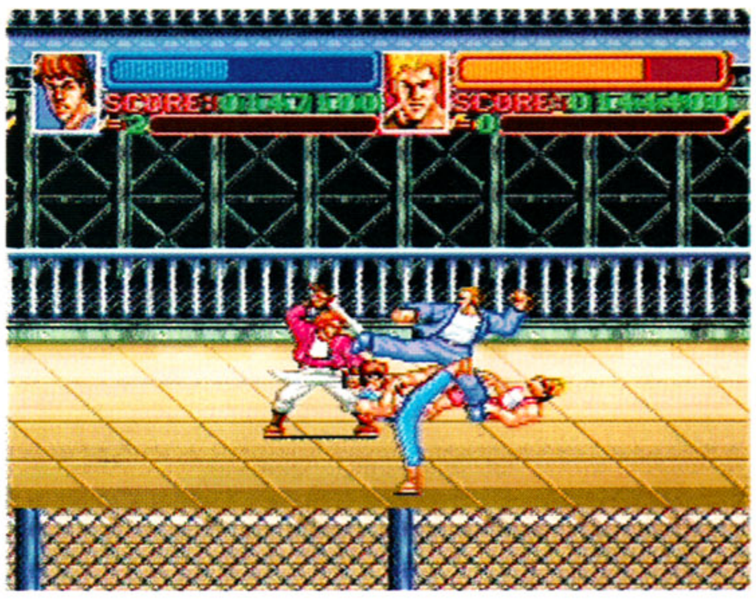


Taking the scenic route – unfortunately you can't actually push baddies off the edge of this glassless lift.

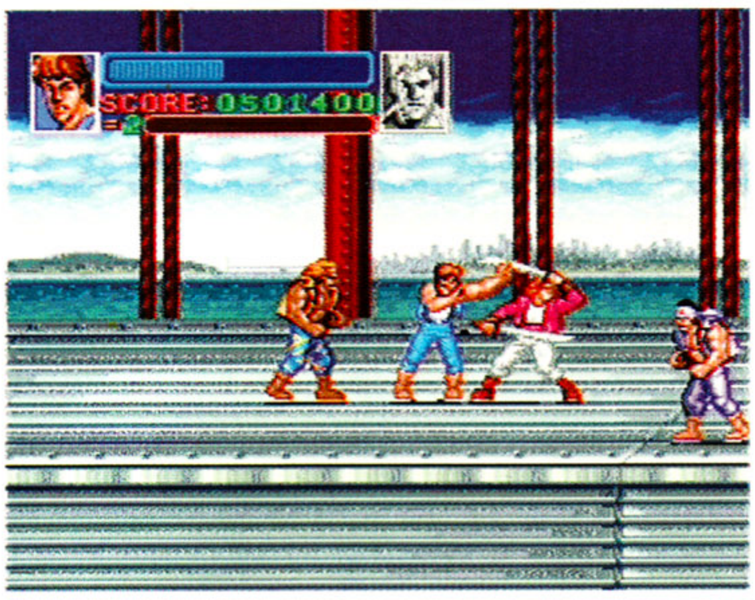
ONE TO AVOID

Technos released a very similar looking beat-'em-up in Japan, before *Super Double Dragon* appeared, called *Kunio Ken: No.1 Tough Guy*. Unfortunately this contains a fair bit of Japanese text which confuses things. Don't be tempted to buy this obscurity – it has its moments, but is a waste of money all the same.

Kunio Ken: No.1 Tough Guy – similar looking beat-'em-up, also by Technos.



A rather nasty kick in the billiards for this small boss guardian. I've seen scarier Currys salesmen.



On top of the lorry in level four. I'm just waiting for the on-top-of-the-Boeing-747-at-30,000ft section.

ATTACK MODE

While grabbing one person Jimmy kicks another.

The trap-the-arm-and-kick-the-face move.

The trap-the-arm-and-elbow-the-face move.

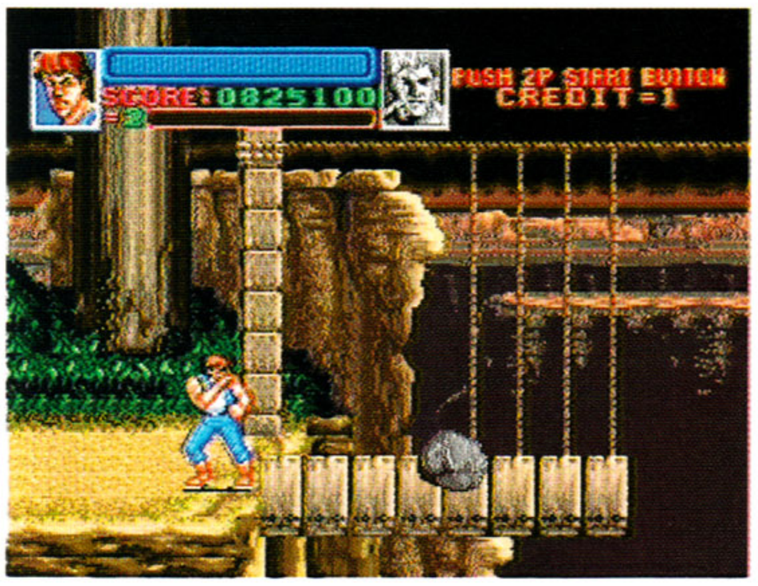
The hold-the-hair-and-knee-in-the-face move.

The grab-the-hair-and-smash-the-face-in move.

Hold down the L or R button for a Ryu-style flying kick.

'Do you have to do that, you're spoiling my hair': Jimmy gets all uptight just before his demise.

'Take that you swine.' In level five things get a lot tougher. (It's no barrel of laughs...)



Level six is set in a forest with obstacles like this bridge to cope with – watch out for loose floor slats.

SECOND OPINION

You either like beat-'em-ups or you don't and it's pretty obvious that Jason isn't too keen, so I'd like to have my say...

Despite the title sounding like a 1970's Bruce Lee film, this is an excellent fighting game. Not only does it have that all important two-player mode, but there are almost 30 fighting techniques *and* seven deadly weapons that can be picked up and used. Scrolling beat-'em-ups don't tend to have a massive variety of gameplay, but this is a valiant attempt and deserves a higher score.

● Jez Bridgeman

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Peoples' first impressions of *Super Double Dragon* have been fairly uniform in the *Super Play* office: 'Oh dear, what's this crap?' was the usual comment, although I thought Stuart Campbell 'Why are you playing this, it's a pile of nob' was more succinct. In fact, I felt like replying 'Get lost you lot it's fab!', but then I just enjoy an argument.

Super Double Dragon may not have been my most eagerly awaited game ever, but playing it brought back all those memories of the first *Double Dragon* coin-op game – it was about 10 times more fun than most coin-op beat-'em-ups because of the sheer variety of moves and things to pick up and whack people with (rather like Sega's *Golden Axe*). It had character too, and no other scrolling beat-'em-up ever tapped that elusive sensation of kicking the crap out of somebody so effectively (elusive for me anyway).

Super Double Dragon seems extremely basic at first, but the huge amount of different moves make for a progressively enjoyable game. It's far more fun than *Final Fight* for example, even in one-player mode, but sadly it looks a lot worse (except for some of the enjoyable character animations).

I would have liked more variety in the weapons and landscapes, and some use of the Super NES hardware might have encouraged a few of those cynics to raise an eyebrow or two. As a two-player game it can be quite good fun – there's such a good solid feel to the punching and kicking and some nice sound effects back up the action, especially the 'death burp' when an enemy bites the dust!

The thing that will put most people off is the 8-bit graphics. While *Super Double Dragon* has a couple of attractive sections, there's no denying it's a pretty poor attempt, with more of a play-it-safe style than anything else. There *is* some hidden charm here, but I find it hard to justify spending this much money on such a primitive game – it's fun and quite tough for a while, but don't you think the Super NES deserves better?

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70%	65%	74%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	68%
62%		

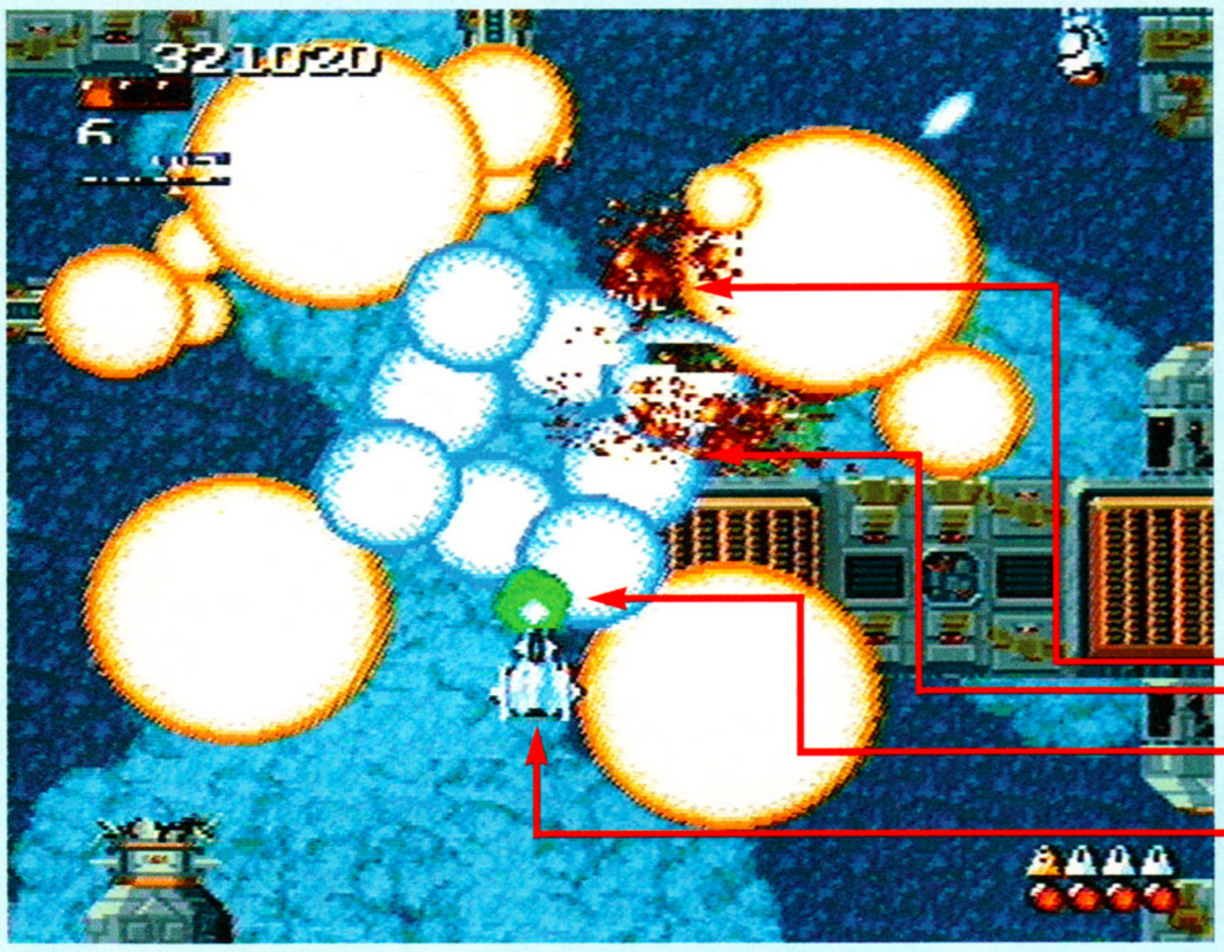
VERDICT: Some varied and enjoyable gameplay, but why does it all have to look so primitive? With more variety in the later levels this might have been more memorable. Fun for a while, but a bit of a waste of money.

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles, (081) 340 8565, and DMC Consoles, (0225) 448253, for supplying review copies.

SUPER ALESTE

UK Release

Game: Super Aleste (US version Space Megaforce)
Publisher: Toho
Developer: Toho in-house
Price: £44.99
Release: Available now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



This is a landmark game: perhaps the first shoot-'em-up to prove conclusively that slow-down is not an endemic Super Nintendo problem. This is gorgeous, fast, and features screens absolutely packed with baddies. What more could you possibly ask for?

A weapon select icon (somewhere hidden in this explosion) – collect this to switch from the weapon you're currently using to a different one.

Baddies zoom in from every quarter of the screen – here are some now. If anyone ever tells you the SNES can't handle sprites just show them this – we've counted over 70 of them at once, and there are probably more.

A power-up – collect this and it'll boost the power of your current weapon (see box in the top left corner of the screen for what you've got so far.)

Here's your basic ship – an unremarkable little silver jobbie. Not that impressive so far, but wait until you see the range of add-on weapons – amongst the most impressive power-ups seen in any shoot-'em-up.

BUILDING UP YOUR FIREPOWER

Collect the orange or green egg things that float down the screen for extra weapon strength – with these, you can slowly build your power from zero to six, at which point you're packing some *very* serious firepower. The green ones are the best – they boost the weapon you're using up a whole level immediately, while it takes a number of the orange ones to do the same job.

LETHAL WEAPONS

THE BEST WEAPONS SELECTION EVER?

If there's one big criticism to make of *Super Aleste* it's that it's a bit top-heavy weapons wise. On the plus side there are lots of them, each appearing in a number of varieties, with at least half of them true originals – unlike anything seen on the Super NES before. When you first get the game you'll have fun just mucking about with them. On the minus side, however, most players seem to reckon the sheer number of power-ups adversely affect gameplay. All too often finishing a level depends on whether you've got a big enough gun or not – in the best designed shoot-'em-ups weapons matter, but not this much.

WEAPON 1
Multi

Yer bog standard multiple bullet jobbie, power upable from a dribble of three little weedy ones to a massive spread. Keep pressing the top R button and you can get the lot shooting backwards, forwards etc. Not the most powerful, but ace for cleaning up those hard-to-get-at baddies.

WEAPON 2
Laser

One of the best weapons, this one shoots a stream of three powerful lasers out of the front of your ship. Whiz through the top R button versions of this and you can turn one or more of them into an orange homing laser, which zooms around the screen, killing baddies before you even know they're there!

WEAPON 3
Circle

The other top one, this gives you a set of green circular globes which revolve around your ship, eventually getting so large and numerous that nothing can get near you. Even better, using the R-button you can lock the balls in a fixed position, effectively giving you a massive battering ram.

WEAPON 4
All

These are blue fireball things which you can point – and then hold – in any direction, providing a fairly powerful multi-directional weapon. In our experience these are quite useful all told, but by no means one of the best.

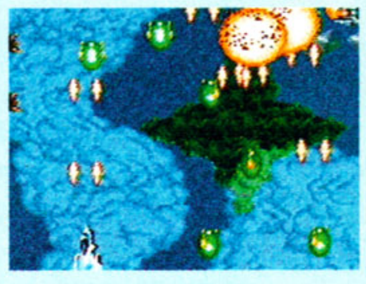
WEAPON 5
Missiles

A crap weapon, this – it fires homing missiles alongside a few little bullets, clearing the screen in rather a vague manner, but never building up too much power. It's completely hopeless when used against some of the bigger villains.

WEAPON 6
Cra

Not quite sure what 'cra' (the name which appears on these power-ups) is meant to signify, but these turn out to be a constant stream of big, well, balls which splinter into smaller bullets when they hit things. Not brilliant, but better than the missiles.

WEAPON 7
Spread



These green droids follow your ship in a little trail, firing as you fire. A useful weapon – especially neat is the way you can lock them in a fixed position to create a stream of firepower in front of a baddy while your ship hides safely in the corner.

WEAPON 8
CGA (The *R-Type* style weapon)

Pretty useless really, this. You keep your finger pressed down to build it up, then release a kill-anything-in-its-path wall of death. Great while it lasts, the problem being you're left vulnerable and weaponless while it builds.

LEVEL 1: CITIES IN THE SKY

How about *this* for decent graphics...?

This game certainly doesn't hide its light under a bushel. Indeed, it kicks off with maybe the best looking level of the entire game – a spectacular flying-through-a-series-of-floating-sky-stations-above-a-lush-forest thing, featuring a fabulous assortment of alien cannon-fodder. Not only are there an awful lot of sprites on screen at any one time (we gave up counting at 70, and I'm willing to believe that at times there are even more), but the game doesn't suffer from slow-down at all. (Just try playing the pathetically juddery *Super R-Type* immediately after this – you won't believe your eyes!) Eventually you work through to the end-of-level boss, a massive, screen-wide space ship thing, who shoots a giant spinning disk at you, which whizzes about the screen. A cinch with the right weapons, though getting the hang of avoiding the big orange disk takes a few tries.

The mean-looking end-of-level boss.

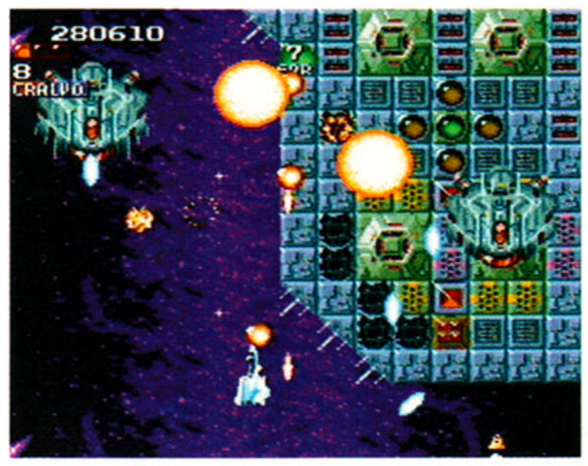
LEVEL 2: THE SPACE STATION

Here we are on a low level run over the station, which cartwheels below.

The whole backdrop to this level (a giant space station, cartwheeling through space) whizzes in and out of the background periodically, some sections being a low-level run over the surface, facing gun emplacements, while others are more your standard space ship vs waves of aliens fare, with the station spinning below you. It's tricky if you've got the wrong weapons, but a walk-through if you've collected the right ones.

LEVEL 3: THE FILLER

Not a full sized level like the last two, but a sort of in-between filler, this doesn't (a rather weedy space ship thing aside) feature any major bad guys, but *does* do rather well in the brightness stakes, featuring all sorts of colourful, blastable tiles. There's no end-of-level boss, just a small(ish) droid to cope with. Still, moving swiftly onwards...



Ah, an interlude – a cup of tea, perhaps?

LEVEL 4: 'THE GREEN WOBBLY ONE'

With a weird swirling Mode 7 background, fit to make your eyes go 'all funny' (there's an even better version of this later on), level four features some very strange baddies. For a start there are these big brown planets which keep jumping out of the screen towards you, then retreat again. End-of-level boss is a big metal sphere which opens up to let little space ships come out. This is, we reckon, one of the hardest levels of the entire game.

Lucky you've got a decent weapon at this stage – you'll need it. These grey spaceships leave deadly solid trails across the screen.

LEVEL 5: THE MINING CANYON

An even better Mode 7 background – this one rather like a swirling snake, though it appears to be representing a million-foot drop down a canyon – but it's the foreground stuff that makes the level. We're in some sort of futuristic mine, with giant grinding machines both opening up routes in the rock you can fly through and threatening to crush you at the same time. Great fun, and the end of level baddy is a bit of a corker too (just see left for details).

This giant circular robot thing pulls its way down the canyon, threatening to lasso you with those giant metal arms. (You have to see it to know what I'm going on about.)

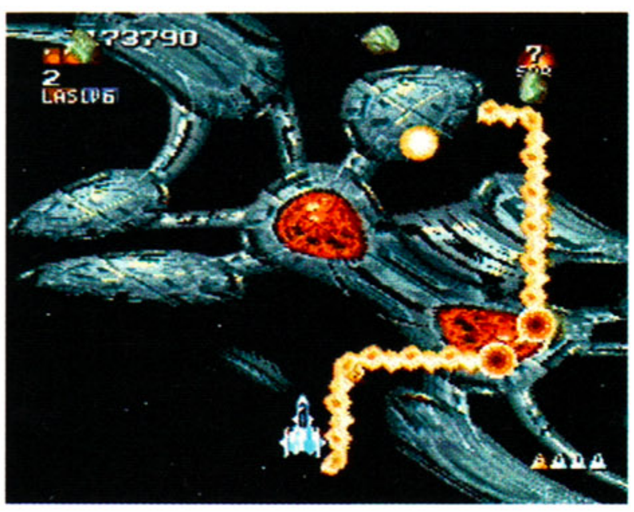
LEVEL 6: THE FILLER (REVISITED)

This section is pretty, sure, but it's also almost identical to level three. If you fail to make it through this, you *do* have problems...

Another short and not very challenging mini-level, this one features a rather lovely purple background, assorted space station thingies and a small droid to kill at the end of the level. And that really is all we can say about it. Next!

LEVEL 7: THE ASTEROID FIELD

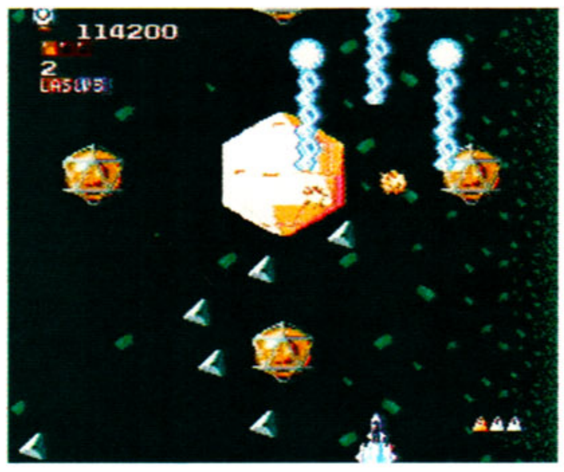
Packed with floating lumps of rock, this pesky level scrolls faster and faster as you go through it, the rocks coming at you at impossible speeds (it calms down after a bit though.) This is a tad boring looking and samey most of the way through, to be honest, but they've saved the best bit till last – a brilliant Mode 7 boss, the whole sprite warping across the screen in a manner which can only be described as stunning. A real Mega Drive-owner sickener, this, and one of the most impressive things yet on the SNES. Excellent.



A very impressive *Alien* (the crashed ship, not the monster)-type boss, this warps across the screen in a bravura piece of Mode 7 trickery.

LEVEL 8: ABOVE THE PLANETS

There's another space station taking up the bulk of this level, this time hovering in front of a backdrop of planets. The unusual thing here is that, at certain points, whole sections of the station move – we've seen this before (most notably in *Final Blaster* on the PC Engine), but that doesn't stop it being neat. A poor end-of-level baddy though – a simple hexagon with 'things' spinning around it.



This low quality boss character crops up at the end of level eight. He's not too tough to kill, and certainly ain't much to look at.

LEVEL 9: THE FILLER (YES, IT'S BACK)

We're still using the laser as perhaps you can see, arguably the best all purpose weapon in the game (though the big green balls are useful too).

Another short one like levels three and six. Mini-bosses chase you around the screen, graphics are very similar to the fill in levels seen before (though the colour scheme is new), and that's about all there is to say...

LEVEL 10: THE DESERT

The whole level – background graphics, with crop circles swirling around in fields, sky stations, alien space ship waves and the like – is very similar to level one, though this time we're actually flying over a desert, not a lush green forest. The boss is almost identical, too, and no more difficult to kill either. Why don't people pace the difficulty a bit better, we ask?

Flick back a page if you're not sure – yep, you *have* seen this before, right at the beginning of the game. (Yawn.)

LEVEL 11: SPEED KILLS!

Watch those barriers! Just when you think you've seen it all, the game throws this weird, ultra-fast, forced scrolling level at you!

The first section is a nightmare! Built up of a series of thin channels, the scrolling goes into hyper-drive, with assorted twists and turns threatening to dash you against the sides. Forget shooting baddies – you'll be better advised just trying to stay alive! Luckily it slows down after a while (if you're still alive), then abruptly ends – no boss or anything. At least it's different to the other shorty levels.

LEVEL 12: FANTASTIC VOYAGE

This much more organic final level feels like you're travelling inside the body of some sort of animal, complete with attacking antibodies and all sorts. (Many of the sprites make horrible squeaking noises as they attack you.) Best bits are the giant end-of-game skull-snakes that wrap their way around the screen. A neat ending, but honestly, by this point you'll be pretty much bored of the game.

Well, here we are – the very end of the game. These rather gruesome skull-headed worm things are just *part* of the final boss.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

This time last month, when we'd first got *Axelay* in the office and were going ga-ga over that, its main frame of reference was *Super Aleste*. Was *Axelay* a better game than that? A definite 'maybe' was the consensus of opinion. With time though, *Axelay*'s charms have dulled. Sure it's spectacular, but is there much game to it? *Super Aleste*, however, has lasted the test of time rather better – we've found ourselves picking this up and playing it now it's on official release almost as eagerly as we did when we first saw the Japanese version.

Like all shoot-'em-ups this has a limited life-span. It's got loads of difficulty levels, but on 'Normal' (there's no 'Easy') Jason finished it in a couple of hours. In the long-term, it's main claim to fame is as a propaganda weapon for whenever there are potential SNES buyers around. Give them 10 minutes oohing and aahing over the action and they'll be down Dixons with a fistful of tenners.

Make no mistake, this is a top game, which deserves a place in any software collection. However, it's by no means perfect. It does come with a couple of obvious faults...

Fault one: Because of hardware problems already discussed at length in *Super Play*, the UK version is some 17% slower than the game you may have played on US or Jap machines. That means it's also 17% easier – previously tricky sprites are now easy to dodge, and previously easy ones are a doddle. All in all, this ain't going to take very long to complete.

Fault two: As with most shoot-'em-ups, the more you play the game, the less there is to it. You've seen all the good stuff by level five or so, and, as it doesn't get any harder from then on, the rest of it's a bit of a walk through.

Fault three: As already mentioned, the ultra-powerful weapons dominate matters rather too much. It's a pity gameplay hasn't been as finely tuned as the graphics.

Still, there's much to enjoy. Some fab weapons, one of the nicer in-game tunes around, great explosions, inventive and spectacular end-of-level bosses (though they're a bit easy), lots of sprites and such a complete absence of slow-down that *Super R-Type* players will hardly believe it's the same machine. Arguably the SNES' best shoot-'em-up to date – certainly the best 'traditional little space ships' one – and a must buy.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
93%	86%	85%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	87%
64%		

VERDICT: Lovely looking and a gorgeous sounding shoot-'em-up which really shows everyone that lots of sprites and no slow-down *can* be done. The only weak points are the gamelife (it's too easy) and an over reliance on (admittedly excellent) weapons. This is still the current benchmark game.

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COSMO GANG

The Japanese are going 'retro' crazy. They're building retro cars (with round headlights and lots of chrome), retro radios (with big knobs and dials)... er... and lots of other retro stuff. And now here's a retro game! Hmm, how shall we do this..?

Japanese Release

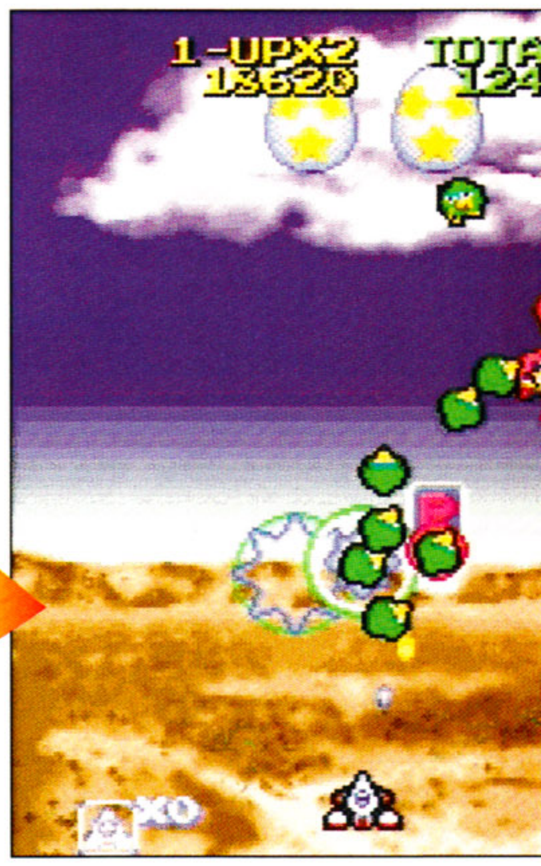
Game: Cosmo Gang
Publisher: Namco
Developer: In-house
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

Area 1, where you're unlikely to run into too much trouble – just shoot all the aliens, and try not to get killed.

Area 3 – fiery, eh? This time, shoot all the aliens while trying not to get killed.

Area 4, which is rather green. (Though not unattractively so.) Shoot all the aliens, and do your best not to get killed.

Area 2 – again, the trick is to shoot all the aliens and try not to get killed.



COSMO GANG PICK-UPS

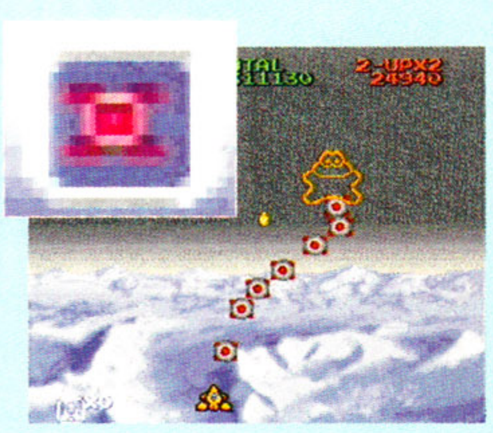
Fifteen years or so ago, if you'd shot a Space Invader and a little icon had dropped out of it, you'd probably have run out of the arcade screaming. These days, though, most players would be very surprised *not* to see an icon fall out of something after they'd shot it.

Cosmo Gang obliges with a fine line-up of add-ons, most of them a little out of the ordinary. Best of all is probably the 'Shoot Me' one. One player picks it up, and the other then pumps bullets into him until he explodes, scattering bullets all over the place and killing just about everything else on the screen. (But, er, sadly we didn't have room to show it to you. Sorry.)

Oh, and once an icon's appeared, it bounces up and down a few times at the bottom of the screen, giving you a sporting chance to pick it up.

Once you've picked up one of these vortex-type things you can place it anywhere you like on the screen. It'll then suck in any aliens that happen to be in the vicinity, and spit them off the screen.

Like the vortex thing, once picked up this spider's web can be fired at will. It spreads out, slowing down all the aliens and making them easier to shoot. (Although it also makes them a bit harder to see.)



Extra weapons are pretty thin on the ground. There's just the double-barrel gun and this more elusive mine-launcher. It sends out a field of slow-moving mines which explode when anything hits them.

LEVEL SELECT

In *Space Invaders*, once you'd cleared a screenful of aliens it was replaced by another one exactly the same. Bor-*ing*. In *Cosmo Gang*, however, every level brings new and exciting challenges (mainly in the form of backgrounds).

There are five areas, each with five levels, plus another area with an end-of-game guardian. Once you've completed an area you can revisit it at will. (This is a bit like having an infinite supply of continues, but slightly more flexible.)

Area 6 – a sneak preview of the bit where, after shooting all the aliens without getting killed, you take on Don Cosmo himself.

Level five, where you shoot all the aliens, without getting killed.

MORE NEW BITS

***Cosmo Gang* might not do terribly well in its attempt to hide its primitive roots, but you can't accuse it of not trying...**

To our massive relief, a two-player mode has been provided. Both players co-operate in taking out the aliens, while trying not to squabble over the power-ups.

These bits appear at the end of each area. They're based on a Japanese water-squirting arcade game, and the object is to stop the baddies reaching the money bags. Hectic stuff.

SECOND OPINION

I knew I should have written this review. To be honest, I wouldn't have given the game a much higher mark, but I did enjoy it a lot more. What's really shocked me, though, is how JD's got the audacity to attack the *Galaga* coin-op! It may be old, but it's still a classic, and a very compulsive game. It's a shame *Cosmo Gang* isn't as good – Namco's *Galaga '88* on the PC Engine was better – but the basic gameplay is still great fun. There's life in the old dog yet.

● Jason Brookes

Shields – there's not much you can say about them that hasn't been said a hundred times already. Basically, they shield you from enemy fire. Only for a limited time, mind.

If there's any fun to be had from the two-player game, it's with the use of these 'swap' icons. They swap over the positions of the two ships, but leave any extra weapons where they are.

Taking the number one slot in *Super Play*'s Top 10 *Cosmo Gang* Pick-Ups is this jack-in-the-box. When you press fire he pops out in a cloud of confetti and scares all the aliens rigid.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Space Invaders is boring. If you don't believe me, go away and have a quick game. The question is, why did we ever think it was any good? What *was* the attraction? That's something I think we'll have to put down to hindsight. Or experience. Or something.

Given that *Cosmo Gang* is firmly and undisputably based on *Space Invaders* (and don't give me any of this *Galaxians* nonsense, or start wibbling on about obscure PC Engine games – they're all *Space Invaders* rip-offs too), what steps does it take to bridge the decades, and give us something that'll keep your joypad in your hand for more than two minutes?

Well, there are the graphics, obviously. You've only got to look at the pictures on these pages to see how great they look. Everything whizzes around the screen at amazing speed, with no slow-down at all, and the backgrounds are smashing.

There's the two-player mode. But it's not much more fun than the one-player game, being of the soppy 'co-operative' variety. Competitive two-player games are the only two-player games as far as *Super Play*'s concerned.

There are lots of pick-ups and add-on weapons. Some of them are brilliant, like the 'Shoot Me' thing. (It's not shown here, but when it appears you shoot your chum until he explodes, killing all the aliens.)

But unfortunately, though it tries its utmost, *Cosmo Gang* never really rises above *Space Invaders*' simple left-right-shoot formula. I can see the appeal of the idea, but I was bored of it in no time at all. It also didn't take me long to finish, with only 30-odd levels, none of them particularly difficult. But then, that perhaps isn't so much of a problem with a *Space Invaders* game.

Right, with that said, I've a horrible feeling that the irredeemably over-enthusiastic Jason is going to give you his point of view. Don't listen! Whatever he says, ignore him! *Cosmo Gang* is cute, sure. And it's nice to take a break from platform-hopping every once in a while. But *Space Invaders* (or *Galaxians*, or *Galaga*, or whatever) is dead, and throwing bucketfuls of pretty graphics, humour and SNES flashiness at it isn't going to help.

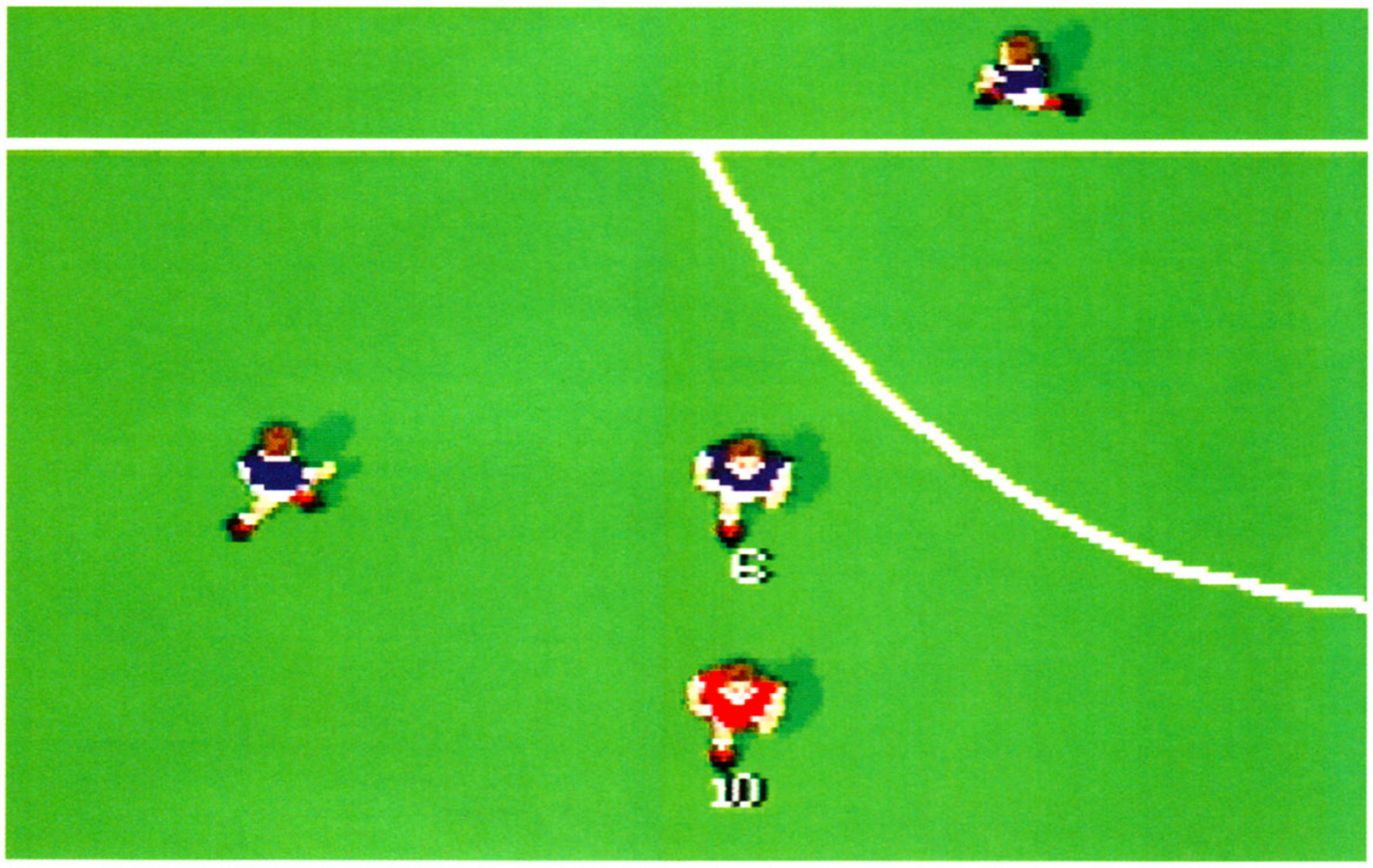
● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84%	82%	70%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	70%
64%		

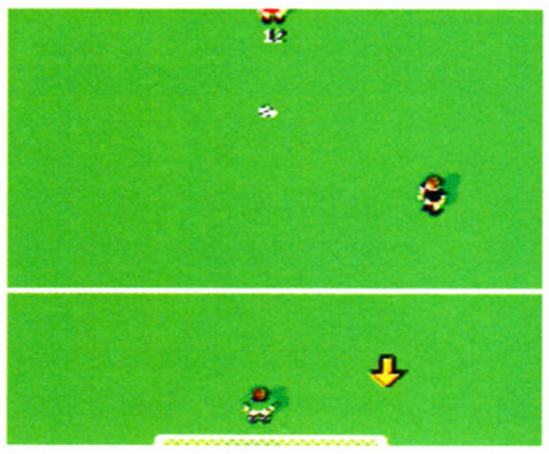
VERDICT: Smart graphics, loads and loads of neat touches, and plenty of humour. It's also pretty good fun to play – for a while. But moving left and right while firing a lot simply wasn't enough to sustain my interest. Sorry.

KICK OFF

Remember the original Amiga *Kick Off*? Despite being very scrappy looking, it earned itself a hoard of devoted fans, back in the heady days of 1988. We've been waiting for a decent sequel ever since...



It's at about this stage – when you've got four or so players on screen – that *Kick Off* starts to have problems. Have another guy run on there and the slow down will get very noticeable indeed. Playing the game in 'normal' (ie high speed) mode is a big no-no too, at least for us. The ball is all but uncontrollable, and things get very frustrating indeed. Slow the game down, however, and it gets a lot more playable. Still a bit stupid, but playable.



Penalties are great. The keeper stands four feet off his line, and when the ball goes in the Super NES takes three seconds to notice before it makes the crowd cheer the goal, with a brilliant sample that hilariously cuts dead after two seconds.

Part of the game's admirably compre-hensive, but dreadfully confusing, options screen set up. There must be a million better ways to organise this, you'd think.

A FOUL FOUL

After a bad foul (which appears to happen completely at random), the fouled player lies on the ground for a bit, the physio comes on, the player limps off, a sub comes on, the ref lectures the fouler and play starts again, a breathtaking (and, it seems, uninterruptable) 35 *seconds* later.

UK Release

Game: Kick Off
Publisher: Anco
Developer: Imagineer
Price: £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1or 2
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit + BB

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

This is a tricky one. As *Kick Off* is such a celebrated home computer game, most people in this country have already decided whether they love it (reasons: high speed, computer control of the really tricky stuff allowing for great head-to-head action) or hate it (reasons: high speed, lack of control, fluky gameplay) already. Certainly, lots of people have been waiting for its first 'real' appearance on the SNES with great interest (Imagineer's less-than-brilliant *Pro Soccer* was actually a first stab at SNES *Kick Off* in all but name).

So was if worth the wait? Well, first off, there are a *lot* of things wrong with it. The ball sometimes goes too fast for the scrolling to keep up, for instance, disappearing off the edge of the screen. All your substitutes – of which there are an infinite number – have the number '12', meaning there can be up to four 12s on the pitch at once. The game tends to lock up when more than four players are on screen at once. The useless scanner and close-up view of the action mean you can rarely tell where you are in relation to the goal. The goalkeepers themselves are too good. It's too fast to be controllable. And so on. Perhaps worst of all is the painful inability of the joypad to cope with the sort of high speed 360° turns that have always been a major part of *Kick Off*. You'll definitely need a joystick to get the best out of this.

However, when all's said and done, this can be fun. First you'll have to fight your way through the ridiculous option screens to turn the speed down – essential if you want to be able to control the thing. Then you'll have to get yourself a joystick (as I said), and last you'll have to find a mate to play against. In this form you'll find yourself laughing and cursing the inadequacies of the game constantly, but having a great laugh all the same. Just like you did playing Amiga *Kick Off*, in fact.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
48%	42%	55%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	52%
72%		

VERDICT: Ridiculously flawed, badly programmed but nevertheless reasonably enjoyable (in two-player mode) soccer game. Should be so much better though.

TOP GEAR

UK Release

Game: Top Gear
Publisher: Kemco
Price: £44.99
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

Feeling of speed isn't bad, and the split-screen two-player mode works a treat.

Left: The driver of the blue car has just hit his nitro – you can tell by the flames – which means he'll be off down that straight like a very fast thing indeed.

Right: *Top Gear* was developed for Kemco by Gremlin, producers of great Amiga driving games like the *Lotus* series, hence the familiar look.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Eight months separate *Top Gear*'s debut in Japan and its UK release. That might not seem like a long time, but in Super NES terms it's virtually a generation. Is *Top Gear* still tops?

In its favour it's got an amazingly fast, realistic road to drive along, and its innovative split-screen design makes for a really competitive two-player game. For these reasons it's picked up fans everywhere, and it got rave reviews when it first appeared on import.

To a large extent I agree – it's great. But, seeing as it's a few months old now, I thought a reappraisal might be in order. And, sadly, the general consensus here at *Super Play* is that *Top Gear* is a little too crude and simple to make a splash, especially now it's got games like *Mario Kart* and the forthcoming *Human Grand Prix* to contend with. It just doesn't hold the attention for as long as it ought to.

It's still a good game,though, but just a little old fashioned, and you could do a great deal better.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
75%	70%	85%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	76%
69%		

VERDICT: A neat little game this one, but you just have to say '*Mario Kart*' and it runs into the corner, shivering. It's just not in the same league...

HOME ALONE

Look who got an embarrassing woolly hat from his granny for Christmas!

UK Release

Game: Home Alone
Publisher: THQ
Price: £44.99
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

Above: Once you've collected up all the valuables, dump them in the cellar for safe keeping.

Left: Boing!

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

HOME ALONE™

I went to see *Home Alone* by mistake. I was bored, and I'd seen all the other films. So when I walked in to find the cinema virtually empty I assumed it must be some sort of arty film. No problem – I was ready for anything. It was when a party of cub scouts filed in and filled the seats in front that I wondered whether I ought to get out while there was still time. I didn't, though, and thus began two of the most painful hours of my life.

The game departs considerably from the film's plot – but not enough to save it. The burglars, who 'Kevin' thwarted in the film, have returned to exact their revenge. Once again, Kevin's family have gone out and left him behind – smart people – and he's trapped in a house crawling with bad guys.

And it's awful. The graphics are naff, and it's boring to play. It's also stupid. The aim is to collect the family's valuables to keep them from the clutches of the baddies, but most are hidden in such silly ways – in mid-air, but invisible, for example – that the baddies wouldn't possibly be able to find them. Most horrific of all, however, are the giant pictures of Culkin that keep appearing.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
46%	51%	40%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	34%
30%		

VERDICT: If you're the kind of person who'd go out intentionally and buy a game called *Home Alone*, well, then, you deserve everything you get.

FACEBALL 2000

Being chased round a maze by huge yellow balls with smiley faces doesn't sound like much fun at all. Nevertheless, we thought we'd better take a look...

US Release

Game: FaceBall 2000
Publisher: Bullet-Proof Software
Developer: Xanth Software
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

Top: Old Smiley Face's just begging you to take a pot shot at him. Above: Collect coins and add 500 points a throw to your score.

Don't let that rather splendid cityscape distract you from that Smiloid lurking in the corner.

TWO CAN PLAY TOO

FaceBall 2000 **really comes into its own as a two-player game. (Or it should do, anyway.) The game on which it's based – *Midi-Maze* on the Atari ST – let up to eight people play at once using the machine's MIDI ports, but two's yer lot on *FaceBall 2000*.**

In the mazes of CyberZone, players 1 and 2 can team up to obliterate the baddies together.

Populate the Arena with baddies (Smiloids), in a maze of your choice, and then see who wins.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

FaceBall 2000 is a game that *ought* to be a sure-fire winner. It has all the ingredients: a simple idea, guns, simultaneous two-player action, er... smiley faces. But somehow it just doesn't add up...

First, the graphics. The 3D maze is made up from lots of filled polygons – something the Super NES is crap at. So it moves around jerkily, and in two-player mode it's horribly slow. Player 1 is the same colour as most of the baddies – player 2 keeps shooting him by mistake. The bullets move really jerkily, so it's hard to see which bullets you've fired, and which are about to kill you.

As for the gameplay, in one-player mode it starts off easy, and then suddenly gets incredibly hard. And, as you've got a good idea of what the next levels contain, there's little incentive to persevere. In two-player mode, however, it just doesn't work. In the CyberZone you keep shooting each other by mistake, as I said before. And in the Arena you just zoom round, and whoever spots the other player first wins. It's all down to luck. (I mean, Matt kept beating me, for heaven's sake.)

On the Game Boy this got pretty good reviews. It's the kind of game that suits the little machine down to the ground. But on the Super Nintendo it just looks... well, crap. Sorry.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
61%	55%	60%

GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:
40%	54%

VERDICT: *FaceBall 2000* is a bit like a piece of bread. It'll sit quite happily in your 'toaster' (er, SNES) for about two minutes, but then it'll pop out and, um... ah.

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles, (081) 340 8565, for lending us the cart.

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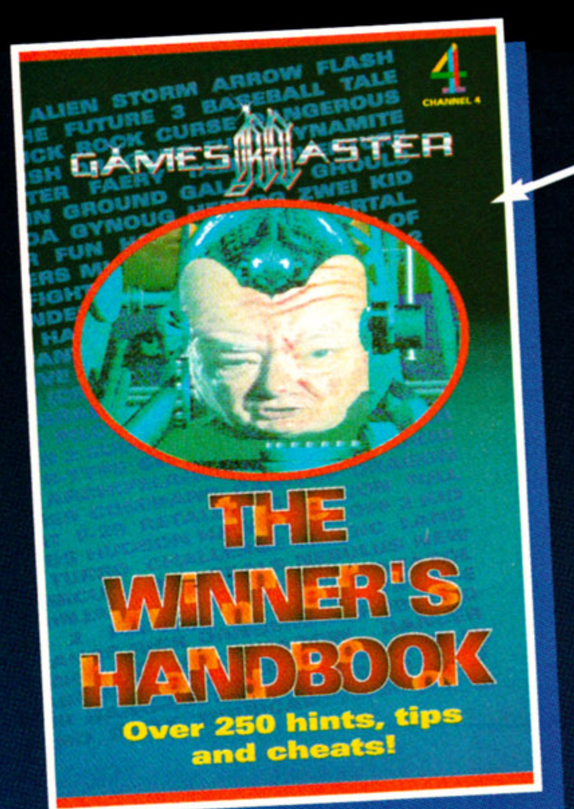

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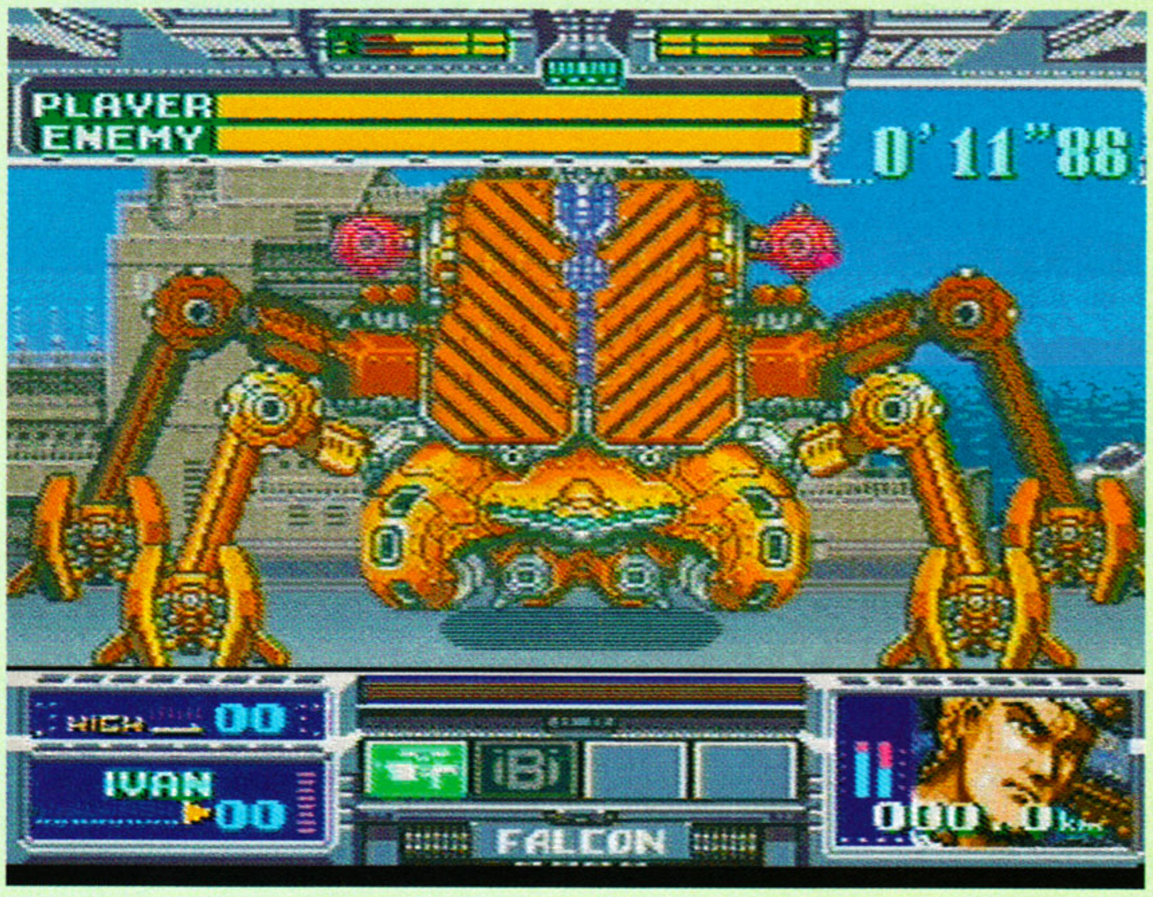
BATTLECLASH



Just bought a Super Scope? Wondering where to point it next? Well here, at last, is the first Scope-compatible game. (Apart from the six you get with it, of course. But, well... hem hem.) Anyway, what's it like? Is there any 'scope' for improvement?

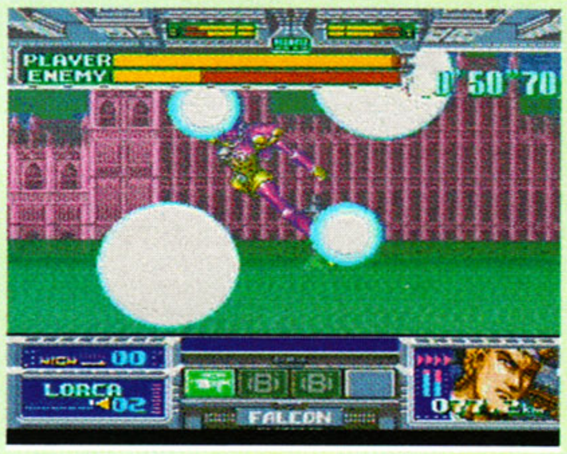
US Release

Game: Battleclash
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo of America
Price: Approx. £30
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

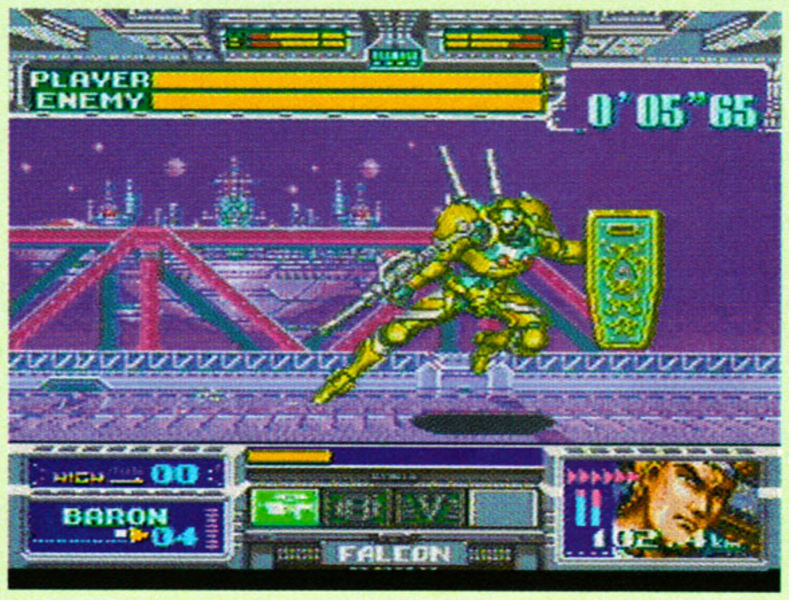
Q. What's orange, ugly and and just asking to be blown away in a hail of laser fire?
A. Not a Datsun 260Z (well, that too), but this giant spider baddy.

Baddies attack you one at a time, and this one is the first you'll encounter. (A Mutant Mutant Turtle, perhaps?) He's unbelievably easy to kill – it's almost as if he *wants* to die.

As its pink armour might suggest, this baddy is a doddle to kill, and actually turns out to have a babe inside.



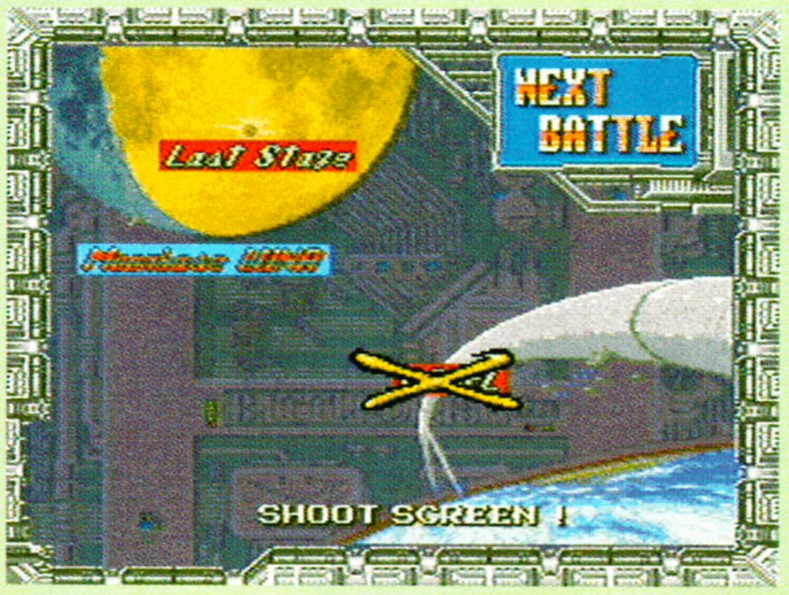
Great balls of fire! (Or photons, anyway.) This baddy's jumping around outside what's left of the Houses of Parliament.



Ha, you can't hide behind that shield! (Er, actually he can, and he does a pretty good job of it, too. You've got to try and shoot the bits that are sticking out.)

ST OR NOT ST...?

Half (at least) of *Battleclash*'s appeal lies in the wacky conversations you have with baddies. They do leave a lot of questions begging, though. Why would someone want to armour his ST? How can one ST be so much better than another? What actually is an ST Ivan? We phoned Atari to ask, but they were out.



This handy map appears between levels to let you know how you're doing. Here we've cleared the Earth and are headed for the last stage. (Good, eh?)

TELLY SCOPE

(Gagh! – Ed.)

WHAT IT IS. HOW IT WORKS. WHETHER OR NOT TO BUY ONE...

Confused by all these 'Super Scope' references? What is it, exactly? With the recent release of the first Scope-compatible game, and the launch of the Super Scope Super Nintendo pack, we thought we'd better take a look. (Then we realised how daft we'd look sitting there with a gigantic piece of plastic on our shoulders, and so made Jonathan Davies do it instead.)

You do look incredibly silly peering through the Super Scope, it's true. (Maybe if they'd painted it black or something...) But extra bits of hardware for the Super Nintendo are pretty thin on the ground, so it's always exciting when a new one comes along.

Although it looks amazingly impressive and complicated, the Super Scope is actually very simple, and not nearly as dangerous as it seems. It connects up to your Super Nintendo in place of one of the joypads and lets you 'shoot' things on the screen. (Well, not actually shoot them, of course – that would break your television. But the effect's the same.)

Interested? Well, you can either buy the Super Scope separately, or pick it up along with a SNES in one of Nintendo's special packs. Either way, the Scope comes with a cart containing six games (which we've tested overleaf) and a special receiver unit that acts as a go-between for the Scope and your SNES.

COMPATIBILITY

An American or Japanese Super Scope won't work on a UK Super Nintendo, so don't bother buying a cheap import one unless you've also got an imported machine. On the other hand, import games should work fine with a UK Scope. However, *Battleclash* is only going to be £30 when it comes out over here in February, so you're unlikely to make any cost saving by buying the US version. (Confused? Me too.)

Each time you use the Scope you've got to calibrate your sights. (It only takes a moment.)

HOW IT ALL WORKS

The Super Scope is a nifty piece of hardware, especially when compared to similar systems on other machines.

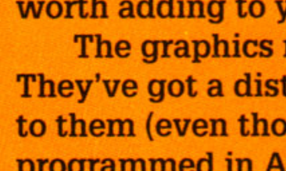
For a start, it works by infrared, which means there aren't any wires between the Scope and your Super Nintendo. Instead there's a little receiver thingy which sits on top of your telly and plugs into Port 2 on your SNES. When you press 'fire' on the Scope, an invisible infrared beam shoots out and tells the SNES where on the screen you're aiming.

As well as the fire button, there's also a pause button on the Scope, and one marked 'cursor' which is a general purpose kind of button.

The downside to all this is that the Scope takes six batteries – and you'll have to remember to switch it off when you've finished.

The Super Scope – tough, eh?

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?



If you've played with the Super Scope at all, you'll know that, so far, all you've been able to do is point it at the screen and shoot things. So what new ideas would they come up with for *Battleclash*? I was rather looking forward to finding out.

Battleclash is a game where you point the Super Scope at the screen and shoot things with it. Ho hum. Okay, so the things you shoot are quite a bit more impressive than the ones in the games that come with the Scope, and all sorts of stuff goes on in the background. But, basically, you're still just shooting things. What's worse, you only ever get to shoot one thing at a time. Tch.

But let's look on the bright side. You've bought a Super Scope, and you want to know whether *Battleclash* is worth adding to your collection. Well...

The graphics really aren't bad at all. They've got a distinctive Japanese look to them (even though the game's been programmed in America) and the backgrounds whizz about really nicely – though for no obvious reason.

The game also boasts a curious line in humour, generally during the conversations baddies have with you between bouts. The intentional jokes aren't really very funny at all, but for some reason, we were falling about laughing nevertheless, particularly when one baddy challenged us to scratch his 'big ST Ivan'. (That probably says more about us than the game, though.) (*Perhaps you'd better shut up. – Ed.*)

Most importantly, though, *Battleclash* is quite a bit better than the existing Super Scope games. You've got to be quite careful about what you shoot and when, and it's neat the way you have to keep swapping between defensive and offensive shooting.

But, having said that, it's still pretty useless. The Super Scope is too ungainly to swing about at speed, and shoulder ache inevitably sets in after a while. But worst of all, it's frustrating only being able to shoot at things. You want to duck and weave around them, jump over them and kick them. If you've already got a Super Scope, it might be worth picking up a copy of *Battleclash* by way of consolation. But if you haven't, this is no reason to change your Christmas list.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	70%	56%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
35%		48%

VERDICT: Quite a bit more exciting than previous offerings, but not conclusive proof that the Super Scope is the peripheral of the '90s (or whatever). It's just too limited, and too repetitive. (And miles too easy to finish.)

The Games

THE ONES THAT COME FREE WITH THE SUPER SCOPE, THAT IS

BLASTRIS A

This is a version of the classic puzzle game *Tetris*, with two differences: a) it's played sideways, and b) instead of moving blocks into place you, er, shoot bits off them till they fit. It's a bit silly, to be quite honest, and very boring indeed.

29%

BLASTRIS B

This time coloured blocks fall down the screen, and some change colour if you shoot them. If you make a line of three blocks of the same colour, all three disappear. Slightly better than *Blastris A*, but there's not much in it. Only a couple of minutes' fun here.

32%

MOLE PATROL

If you really twisted my arm, I'd probably have to admit that *Mole Patrol*'s a bit of all right. It's extremely simple – you just shoot the blue moles as they pop out of their holes, and leave the pink ones alone. It's actually quite good fun, and dead cute.

49%

INTERCEPT

Missiles fly across the screen, and you've got to shoot them. The catch is that you have to allow a bit of time for your shots to reach them, which means aiming slightly in front. It's professionally done, but good for about one-and-a-half minutes tops.

32%

ENGAGE

Here you're chasing enemy aircraft around, trying to shoot them down while avoiding their missiles. It's a bit like the coin-op *Afterburner*, only even worse, and the ground doesn't spin round. Again: Nicely done, but good for about one-and-a-half minutes.

35%

CONFRONT

Oh crumbs. This is just the same as *Engage*, only this time the aircraft become robots and they're coming towards you. It's been neatly programmed, and is probably stretching the Super Scope to its limits, but is still really very boring.

35%

IS IT WORTH IT?

UPPERS

The Scope actually does what it sets out to do extremely well. It's well made, surprisingly accurate and pretty high-tech too – it's a real plus not having bits of wire dangling all over the place.

As for the six games that come with it, well, coming direct from Nintendo they're extremely well programmed. And the actual 'shooting' side of things is done so well it does actually feel like you're shooting things, rather than sending electronic signals to your SNES.

DOWNERS

The design of the Scope does have its disadvantages. For a start the sights are possibly *too* accurate – you tend to hit what you're aiming for every time. Plus it's too bulky to swing around quickly, and the weird position you hold it in makes your shoulder hurt.

The games are the real problem, though, because the 'scope' of the Scope is so limited – all you do is point it at the screen and shoot. To their credit, they do their best to take full advantage of the system. But shooting coloured blocks is much the same as shooting moles, missiles or planes, and it gets boring in no time at all.

As for alternative games, there's *Battleclash* (which doesn't get a UK release till February), but nothing else on the immediate horizon.

THE VERDICT

Judging by the software currently available for it, the Super Scope simply isn't worth the money – either on its own, or as part of a Super Nintendo pack. And, to be quite honest, it's very difficult to imagine a game that actually *would* be any good on it. Until somebody writes one, save your pennies.

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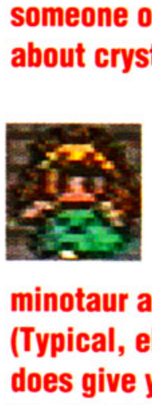
FINAL FANTASY
MYSTIC QUEST

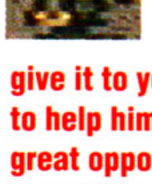
If you said 'RPG' to an Amiga or PC owner, they'd be gone within the blink of an eye. The prospect of screens full of orcs, elves and action points is a frightening one. But, thanks to games like *Zelda*, *Ys III* and *Lagoon*, RPGing on the SNES is something the whole family can enjoy. Just check out this game, for instance...

THE CAST

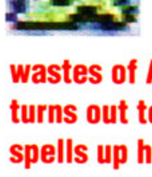
You'll meet all sorts of different characters during your quest. Some are friendly, while others might take a bit of persuading. One thing's for sure, though – they all have big eyes. Here are a few of them...



Here's, well, whatever you decide to call him. He's your character, anyway, and he comes equipped with a sword and not much else. By the end of the game he ought to be a great warrior, with a babe hanging off each arm.



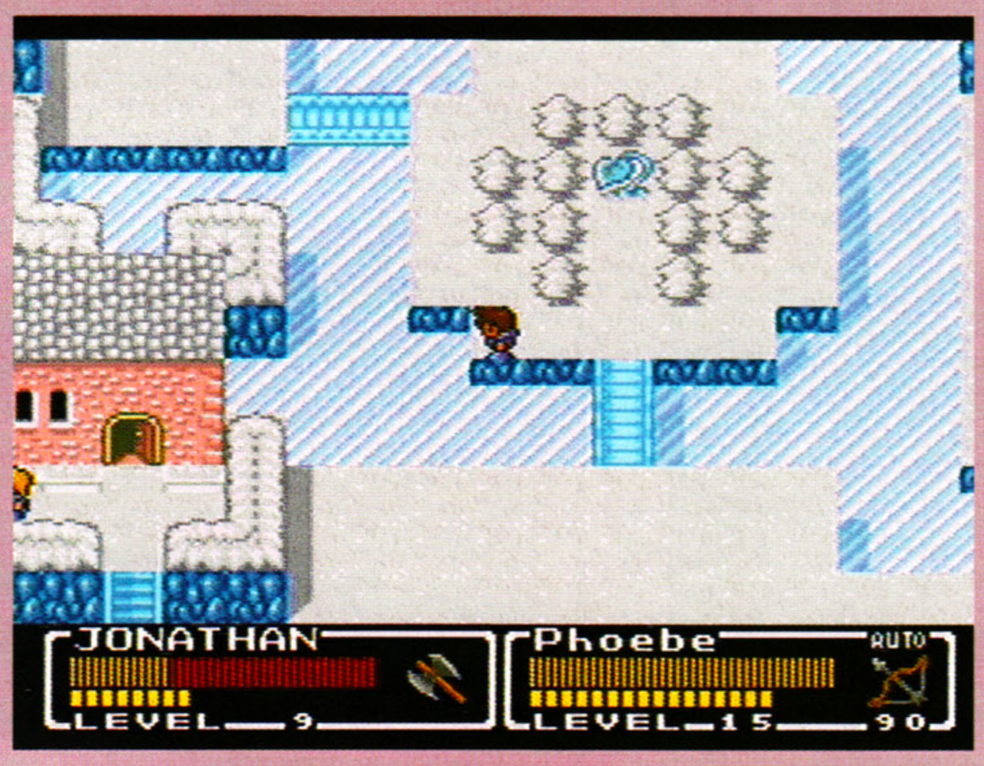
This mysterious old man appears at various points throughout the game, and fills you in on the plot (which is something to do with saving the world from an evil someone or other, and some stuff about crystals).



Kaeli is the first person to join your team. Though pretty, she soon gets nobbled by a minotaur and needs rescuing. (Typical, eh?) In her favour, she does give you an axe which is great for chopping down trees.

To save Kaeli you'll want an elixir, which you'll need to get off Tristam. Before he'll give it to you, though, he wants you to help him kill lots of baddies – a great opportunity for building up your Experience points.

Once you've rescued Kaeli, Phoebe is the next chick in line. You meet her in the icy wastes of Aquaria, and she usefully turns out to have some pretty nifty spells up her sleeve, as well as a handy clawed glove.



US Release

Game: Final Fantasy: Mystic Quest
Publisher: Squaresoft
Developer: Squaresoft in-house
Price: Approx. £30
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

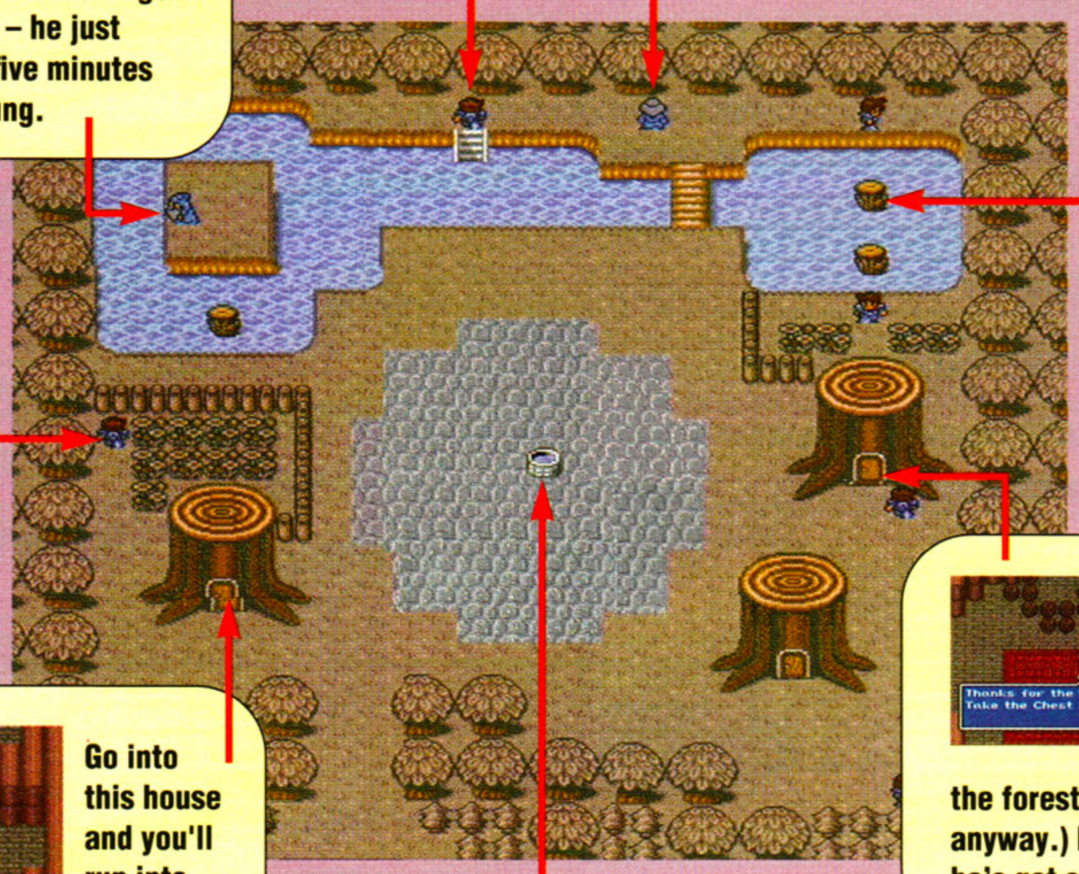
Final Fantasy: Mystic Quest **sees you trying to free the world from the grasp of some dreadful baddy or other. Each area of the land has been affected in a different way – this village has been horribly frozen.**

The really old bloke on this island hasn't got anything much to say – he just grumbles about how five minutes ago he was really young.

Quite what this ladder is for isn't clear, as stepping into the water just gets your feet wet.

The population of the village have been prematurely aged by the mysterious blight that's afflicting the whole land.

Hop across these logs to get into the old man's back garden.



Here's our hero, making one of his many appearances on this page.

Go into this house and you'll run into Kaeli, whose help you'll need later on. She's a little reluctant to help you at all, but a quick flash of your withered branch should change her mind.

Well well well...

You know that chap you helped back in the forest? (Well, you did, anyway.) Here he is again, and he's got something to give you.

One of the many locations in *Mystic Quest*. (Er, okay, it's the first one. You want to make something of it?)

THE FINAL FANTASY STORY

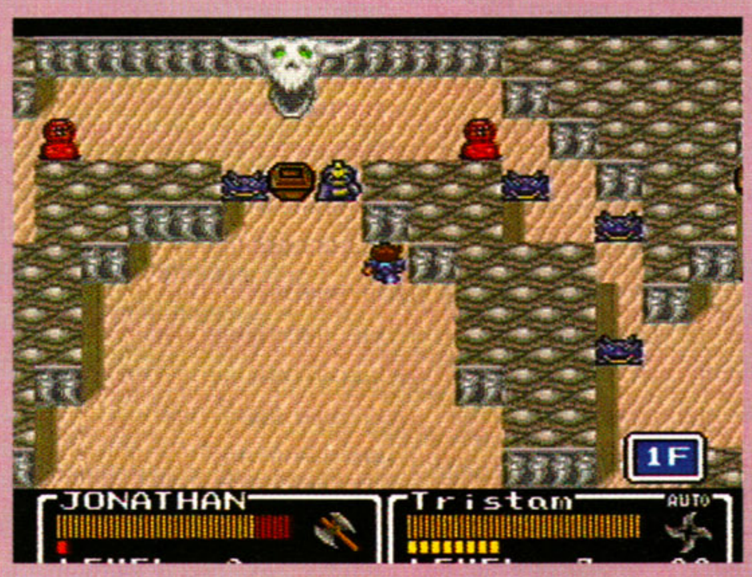
Final Fantasy V, the next game in the series (after *Final Fantasy: Mystic Quest*) to be released.

Okay, this bit's incredibly complicated, and has taken hours of research. So a) listen up, and b) be jolly grateful. (Deep breath.)

Final Fantasy: Mystic Quest is one of series of *Final Fantasy* games that consists of *Final Fantasy I* and *Final Fantasy II* on the Game Boy, *Final Fantasy* on the NES, *Final Fantasy II* on the SNES – which is called *Final Fantasy IV* in Japan for some reason – and *Final Fantasy V*, which is also on the SNES. (Or, at least, it will be when it's released, though much excitement surrounds it in Japan already – where the series is hugely popular – as it's the first 16 Mbit *Final Fantasy* game! You might be better off waiting for *Final Fantasy III*, though, which is the US version.) This one – *Final Fantasy: Mystic Quest* – doesn't actually fit into the series as such, being more of a *Final Fantasy* spin-off, aimed at introducing younger players to the delights of role-playing games through its simplified plot and less challenging puzzles.

(Wheeze.)

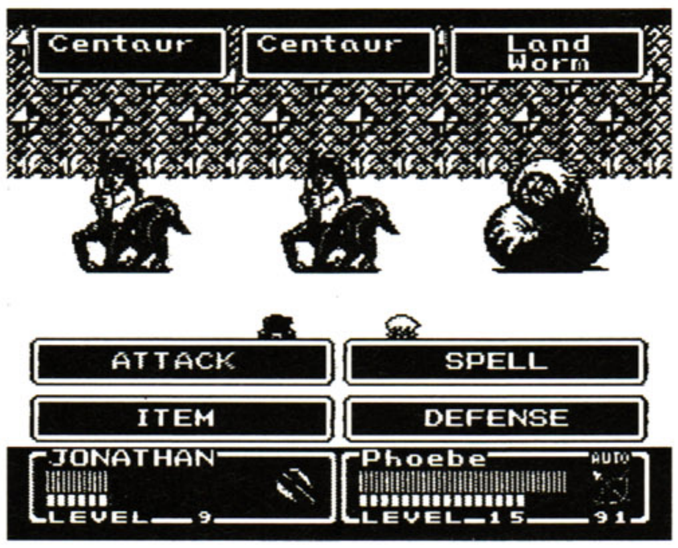
Look, we've even found a tip for you. Just inside the forest, right at the start of the game, is a chest. Open it and you'll find some cure potions. Then leave the forest, re-enter it and – woah! – there's the chest again. Do this often for loads of potions.



The Bone Dungeon is absolutely crawling with these baddies (as well as lots of old bones). Right at the end of it is Flamus Rex, who's guarding the first crystal and is a real git to kill. (Luckily you've got Tristam to help.)

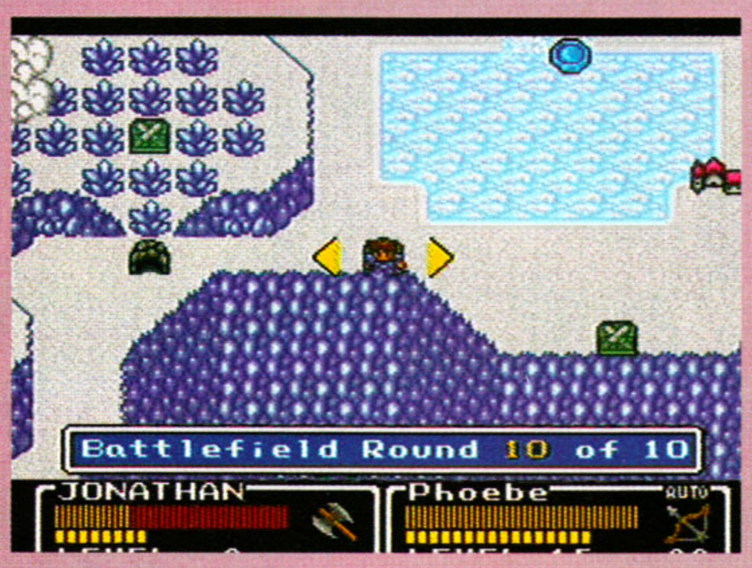
What would an RPG game be without an inventory? Here you can see that withered branch in all its glory, as well as a few potions and things.

BATTLE STATIONS



While *Zelda* treats battles as simple sword fights, *Mystic Quest* complicates things a little more. When you encounter a gang of monsters, the action flips to this screen, which shows you facing the monsters. Each of you has a certain number of points, which are reduced each time you're hit. You can attack monsters with either weapons or spells, and your attacks will be all the more successful if you've accumulated lots of Experience points.

But what happens when you're completely outnumbered? Luckily, as you progress through the game you'll be able to team up with other characters, who'll fight alongside you. (Only one at a time, mind.) These characters will hopefully know some decent spells (life spells are particularly useful if you get killed), and will also absorb some of the flak from the bad guys.



Like so many SNES games, *Mystic Quest* gives you this map which plots your progress through the game. You can re-visit locations to pick up goodies and increase your Experience points.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

If a game's described as 'aimed at the younger player', you can usually bet that not only will it be complete rubbish, but you'll have it finished within minutes – even if you're barely out of nappies. This is set to change with *Final Fantasy – Mystic Quest*. At last our long-suffering Younger Players can enjoy a game that's been specially designed for them, rather than having to make do with an Older Player's hand-me-downs.

The chronologically challenged (*Who? – Ed*) aren't the only ones who'll benefit from *Mystic Quest*'s simplified approach, either. The vast majority of the population find fantasy role-playing games rather daunting – me included. But no-one could possibly be scared of *Final Fantasy: Mystic Quest*. It eases you gently into the swing of things, and never gets even remotely complicated and boring. It's neat the way the intro gently blends into the start of the game.

Given that the game lives up to its accessibility promise, then, how does it fare in the fun stakes? Well, the graphics aren't exactly fantastic. The colours are a bit drab, and the sprites rather small. (There are plenty of nice bits, though, and some of the baddies look great.) The music is brilliant, however, which helps.

But best of all, *Mystic Quest* is really nice to play. It's got a great line in humour – the bemused look your character gives you when something weird happens, for example, and I loved the bit where you discover a really important crystal, but your companion wanders off and starts playing with a telescopic arm or something. (Sorry, it's one of those 'had to be there' occasions.)

The only aspect of *Mystic Quest* that can't reasonably be excused is its size. Four megabits is absolutely nothing in RPG terms, and after about an hour's playing I was roughly a fifth of the way through the game. And if I can get a fifth of the way through in an hour, our Younger Player would probably be about half-way through after half an hour. (*Er, hang on. That's not... Oh yes. I was forgetting – Ed.*) But then, at this price (around £30 from most importers), who's complaining?

Final Fantasy: Mystic Quest doesn't quite measure up to the standards set by *Zelda*, *Ys* and the forthcoming *Dragon's Quest V*, but it's a really smart little game, and I enjoyed playing it immensely. It's also a great introduction to fantasy role-playing – just as its makers intended.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70%	87%	88%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	79%
62%		

VERDICT: Funny, hugely enjoyable and a great introduction to the genre. Just don't expect it to last you for very long.

DRAGON QUEST V

INSIDE JAPAN'S FAVOURITE GAME

By Matt Bielby and Tai Ono

Remember the queues for *Street Fighter II* when it was first released in Japan? They're as nothing next to the ones Tokyo saw for *Dragon Quest V* when it appeared back in September. This is the most popular game series of them all in Japan, and *Dragon Quest V* (the first on Super Famicom) is the most popular episode of the lot. But why then, if it's so good, have so few people outside that country even heard of it?

Dragon Quest: the complete set of 8-bit NES cartridges.

It's almost impossible for games players in this country to realise just how popular the *Dragon Quest* series has become in Japan. Imagine the amount of excitement and media coverage we've had for *Street Fighter II* over here, say, then double it, and you'll still be nowhere near. After all, Japanese game shops were seeing queues of up to 12,000 waiting patiently outside their door to buy the game on its first day of release. It'll be a long time before any single game earns itself that sort of reaction in the UK...

Dragon Quest music CD.

SLIME GOES TO TOWN...

...but he doesn't stay there for long. He doesn't get a chance – he's too damn popular. You see, the *Dragon Quest* characters, with the blue blob Slime leading the way, currently appear on just about every merchandisable piece of kit you can imagine – stuff which normally sells out immediately. We've seen mugs, pencils, collectors' cards etc – this thing you see here is a CD of *Dragon Quest* music. After Slime, perhaps the most commonly merchandised character is Dragon Kid, the tiger-like thing on this month's cover.

Dragon Mad, a friendly monster.

BUT WHY *DRAGON QUEST*?

That's a difficult one to answer. Certainly, it's hard to see the appeal from an outsider's point of view. The *Dragon Quest* series are fairly involved fantasy role playing games, laden with Japanese text – not unlike a hundred that get launched in Japan every year. Only those fluent in Japanese could hope to understand the reams of options and text boxes appearing on screen whenever you come across a problem, someone to talk to, or try to do anything complicated – as you can see from the screen grabs, we got stuck very early on in the game!

Typically confusing in-game screen. It looks like *Zelda*, but with (much) more writing.

COMING TO AMERICA

So, the original Japanese *Dragon Quest*s were never likely to do well outside their native country, that's obvious. There must be more to it than that, though – surely translating the games into English can't be that hard?

Well, no, it's not. The technical details aren't tricky at all – indeed, the first four games, only ever available on NES, *were* translated, and sold in America under the *Dragon Warrior* label.

The thing is, something was obviously lost along the way. Indeed, the series is nowhere near as popular in the US as it is in Japan, where the admittedly lousy NES graphics (*Dragon Warrior IV* 'looks and sounds like lizard stew' said one popular American games mag recently) have turned a healthy proportion off the series. The far less appealing American box artwork may have done its share to marginalise the games there too.

Which brings us to an interesting point. You see, graphics are rather more important to the series than a quick glance at the screenshots would indicate. In many ways what really matters is *not* what you see on-screen, but the character designs, which are done by Akira Toriyama, one of the most popular Japanese comic artists. Akira's the guy behind *Dragon Ball*, the manga series which has since spawned a TV series and Super Famicom game. He developed the *Dragon Quest* character designs and series artwork from the start, creating a whole host of instantly recognisable characters. The blob-like Slime, for instance, is a big star in Japan.

Cute, appealing and unusual characters aside, the other main reason for the *Dragon Quest* success is simply that the Japanese like 'that sort of thing.' The games are big, can seem fairly slow moving, are packed with fairly repetitive battle scenes, and jammed full of text – just the sort of thing they love. They're a patient people, you see – as these games show, much more patient than we are.

Papas, your father in the game, complete with our young hero (on the left).

PLAYING DRAGON QUEST V: HOW THE GAME ACTUALLY WORKS

The *Dragon Quest* games are long elaborate quests, featuring all sort of sub quests you've got to undertake along the way, lots of people to meet and get information off, lots of monsters to fight (you can collect gold from dead ones), assorted characters you've got to recruit to your party and, somewhere at the end of all this, a big bad guy to defeat before he invades the land with lots more monsters (or something). As you make your way through any of the games, you'll keep coming across towns at which different things can be done. At item shops you can buy or sell stuff like holy water, while weapons shops flog more offensive stuff. At inns you can stay the night to replenish both Hit and Magic Points, while churches will heal poisoned people or even reincarnate dead ones – at a price!

Dragon Quest fever: The game (above) and our heroes (right).

In the *Dragon Quest* games there are eight different types of character you can choose between to build up your team. The different games allow you to lead parties of various sizes, though usually only four are allowed in the fights. Here's how they stack up:

Warrior

That's what you play – an all round fighter with Knight-type strength, but also a special set of attack magics only warriors can use.

Knight

Can be equipped with heavy weapons, and have the highest Hit Points. Can't use magic though.

Magician

Strong at offensive magic, but lousy in the Hit Point stakes. Can't carry many weapons either.

Clerics

Expert at defensive magic, and essential for replenishing Hit Points of other team members.

Philosopher

You'd think he'd be useless – not so! Instead these guys are good at both types of magic, and pretty strong physically too.

Martial Artist

Born to fight, just like the Knights, but they can't be equipped with many weapons.

Businessman

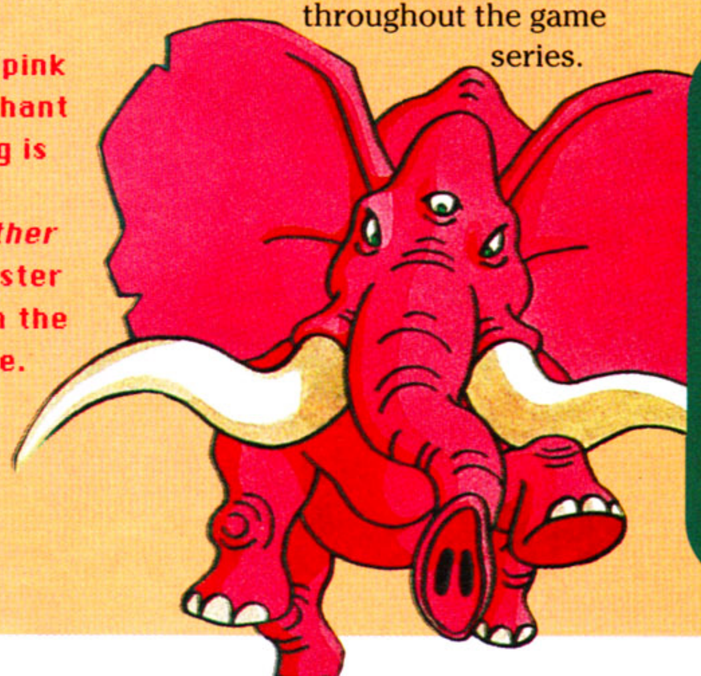
Yes, really. These guys can give you info on items and weapons you don't understand, as well as help out when buying and selling things.

Clowns

Very high in Luck, they rarely get hit during even the fiercest fights. However, they're of limited use otherwise.

The big difference between *Dragon Quest V* and the previous games is that this is the first to allow you to recruit monsters to your side, not just boring old people. There are over 200 different types of monster in the game, but 40 of them have the potential for good – they can be won over to your side. You can equip them with weapons, and build up their power to help out in battle – not only are they often really powerful, the monsters are all so different that this game is much more variety packed than earlier ones.

That said, the monsters still fit into the same categories as human characters have done throughout the game series.



This pink elephant thing is yet *another* monster from the game.

You get your warriors, you knights and your businessmen. For instance, Slime is a cleric character, while Dragon Kid (the tiger-like creature) is a Knight.

The other big improvement recently added to *Dragon Quest* (it first appeared in the NES-only *IV*, and has been carried over to *DQV*) is Artificial Intelligence. In early versions of *Dragon Quest* you directly controlled all the characters in your party, but now you only handle the hero. The computer AI does the rest. In a fight your companions will decide which moves to use themselves – and they're meant to learn by their mistakes, improving in intelligence as the game goes on. (From people we've talked to, it's dubious whether you actually notice this as you play the game, but it's the thought that counts.)

DQV will be released as *Dragon Warrior V* in America soon. Look out for our review.

Japanese Release

Game: Dragon Quest V
Publisher: Enix
Developer: Chun Soft
Character Designer: Akira Toriyama
Price: Approx. £50
Released: 27 September 1992
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 12 Mbit + BB

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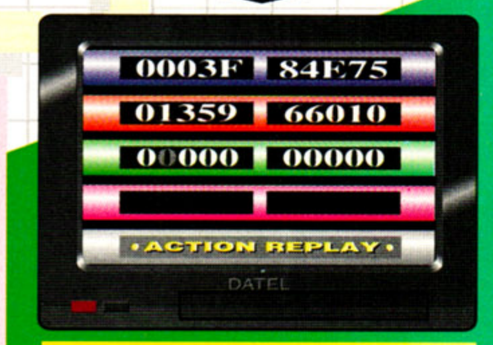

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SUPER MARIO WORLD

SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

NINTENDO (UK/US/JAPAN)

By Rich Pelley

Free with many Super Nintendos, and now sold as a stand-alone game in its own right, the superb/gigantic/incredible (take your pick – all superlatives seem to fit) *Super Mario World* is one of the best games available on SNES, or any other system. And, of course, it's one of the most popular, too. The only problem is finishing the damn thing – it's massive. Or at least, that *used* to be the problem...

Possibly the first video game character ever with sideburns!

Because *Super Mario World* is such a huge game, it's taken us quite a few pages to show it all! Get ready to take on all seven worlds in your mission to rescue Princess Toadstool...

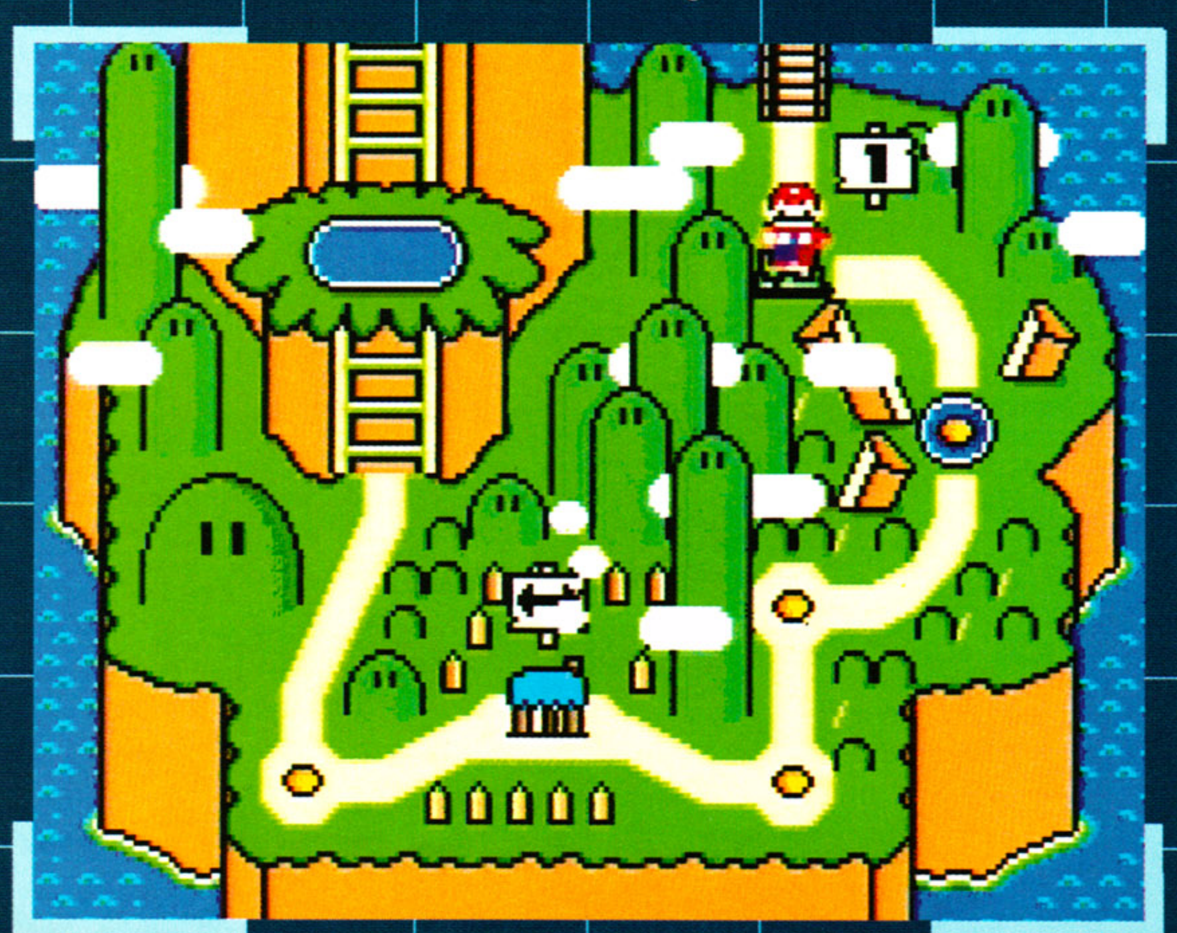
World 1: Yoshi's Island

Completing this Island is pretty obvious really. Everything is exactly as it seems – there aren't even any hidden worlds to find (unlike in later sections of the game). However, here's some stuff you just may have missed:

- On Island 1 you can fly to a 3-Up located in the sky.
- On Island 2, hit all eight Koopas with the red shell and you'll gain an extra life; you can build your lives up by Start/Selecting repeatedly. Island 2 is actually quite a good level to keep playing through continually – here you can collect lots of Yoshis and lives while still early on in the game. Eat a whole load of red apples for an extra life, eat the green ones for more time.

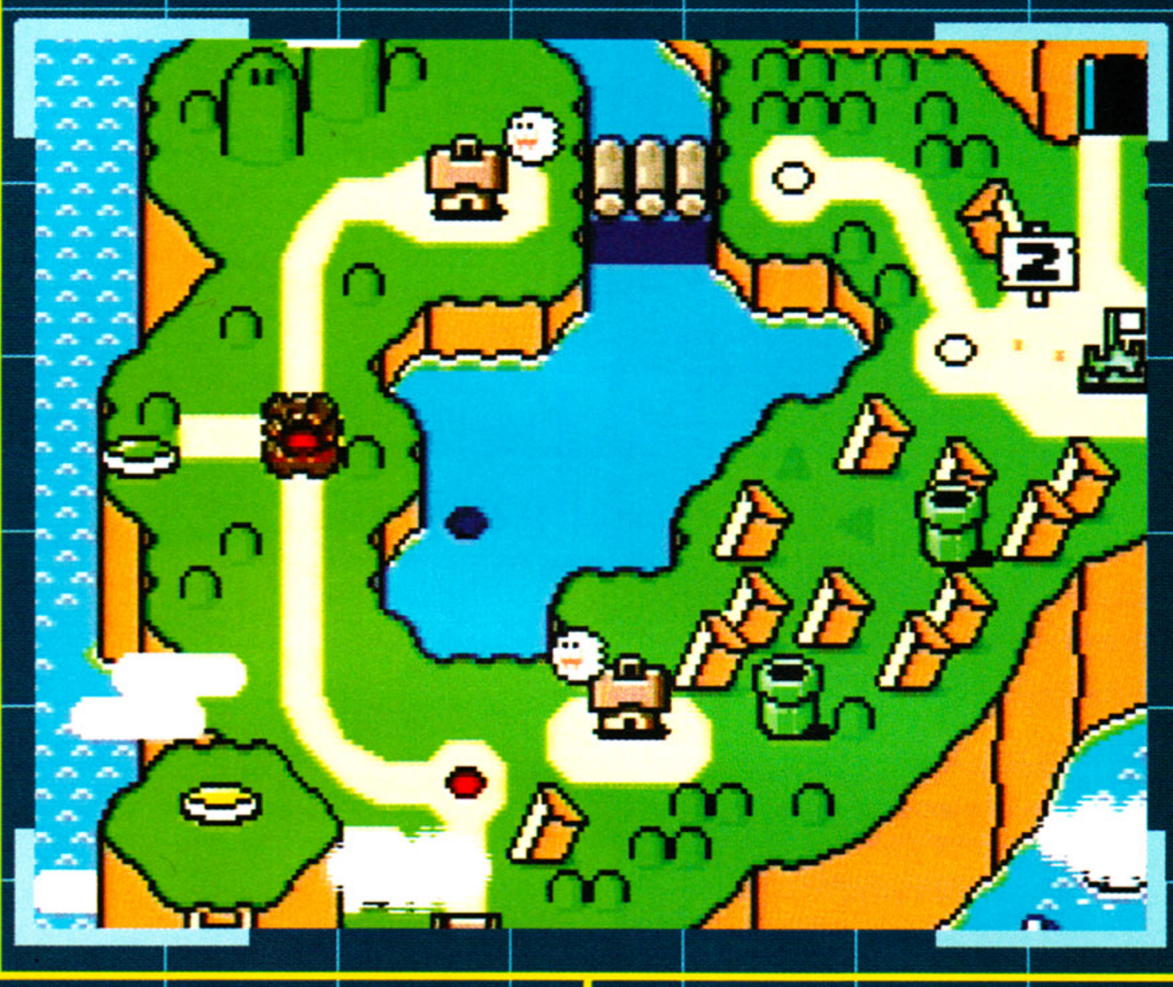
A And the Yellow Switch Palace practically slaps you in the face.

Above: The Yellow Switch Palace.
Below: Yoshi's Island.



World 2: Donut Plains

The first, and most obvious, secret area of this game is at the end of Donut Plains 1, reached either with the aid of the cape or by activating the Green Switch. If you still still haven't worked



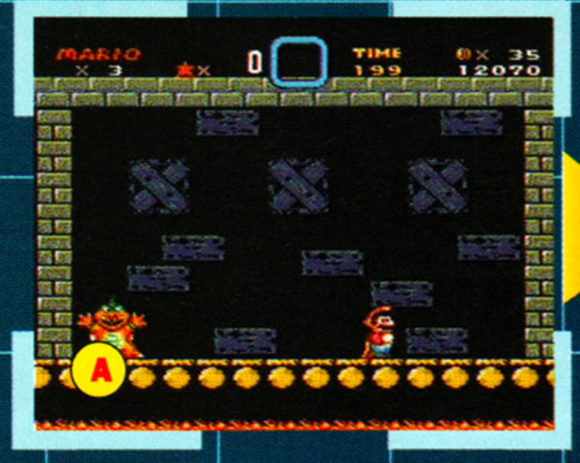
IGGY'S CASTLE

B Wait until Iggy's side of the hill is pointing downwards, then jump into the air and onto his head to knock him into the lava. By the way, did you know that (on the UK and American versions) it's possible to replay castles and fortresses by standing over them and simultaneously pressing the L and R buttons on top of the controller? Extremely handy, this, especially for, er, taking screenshots.

DEFEATED BOWSER? OK, but have you found:
a) The Top Secret Area via the hidden exit in Donut Ghost House? b) Donut Secret 2? c) All five entrances to Star Road (via Donut Secret House, Vanilla Secret 1, Valley of Bowser 4, the Forest Fortress and Soda Lake)? d) Soda Lake? d) Goal 2 from Forest of Illusion 1 to Forest Ghost House AND the second goal from Forest Ghost House leading back to Forest of Illusion 1? e) Goal 2 from Forest of Illusion 4? e) The Chocolate Secret Area? f) The lock and key in Valley Ghost House? g) The 10 goals in the five Star Worlds..? (Etc...)

Yoshi Island's boss is Iggy – get rid of him by pushing him into the lava.

SUPER MARIO



Watch out! Morton can rotate and walk up walls and across ceilings.

Ha! Morton's just a memory. On to the Vanilla Dome...

out the whereabouts of the Green Switch, it's above the group of four Rotating Blocks at the end of Plains 2 (you'll need to throw a Koopa shell, or fly up and hit the fourth of these blocks).

Donut Secret 1 also has two goals, one leading to Donut Ghost House, and the second to Donut Secret House – use the Switch Block on the row of brown blocks to obtain the key. To reach the sneaky second goal to Star World 1 from Donut Secret House, hit the rotating block directly above the exiting yellow door and climb. And to reveal the Top Secret Area, take the cape to Donut Ghost House and fly straight up the left side of the screen.

MORTON'S CASTLE

When you find a row of five Rotating Blocks, hit the fourth one along to create a vine leading to an invisible extra-life block. To kill Morton, jump on his head whilst he's on the ground – lure him down from the ceiling by running in the opposite direction. He'll only take three hits to die.

DID YOU KNOW that it is actually possible to finish *Super Mario World* by only completing 13 levels?

1 Yoshi's Island 1
Yellow Switch Palace
2 Yoshi's Island 2
3 Yoshi's Island 3
4 Yoshi's Island 4
5 Iggy's Castle
6 Donut Plains 1 (Hidden Goal)
7 Donut Secret 1 (Hidden Goal)
8 Donut Secret House (Hidden Goal)
9 Star World 1 (Hidden Goal)
10 Star World 2 (Hidden Goal)
11 Star World 3 (Hidden Goal)
12 Star World 4 (Hidden Goal)
13 Front Door (Bowser's Castle)

Theoretically, it's possible to finish the game in 11 levels, without visiting the Yellow Switch Palace, but that would be *incredibly* difficult.

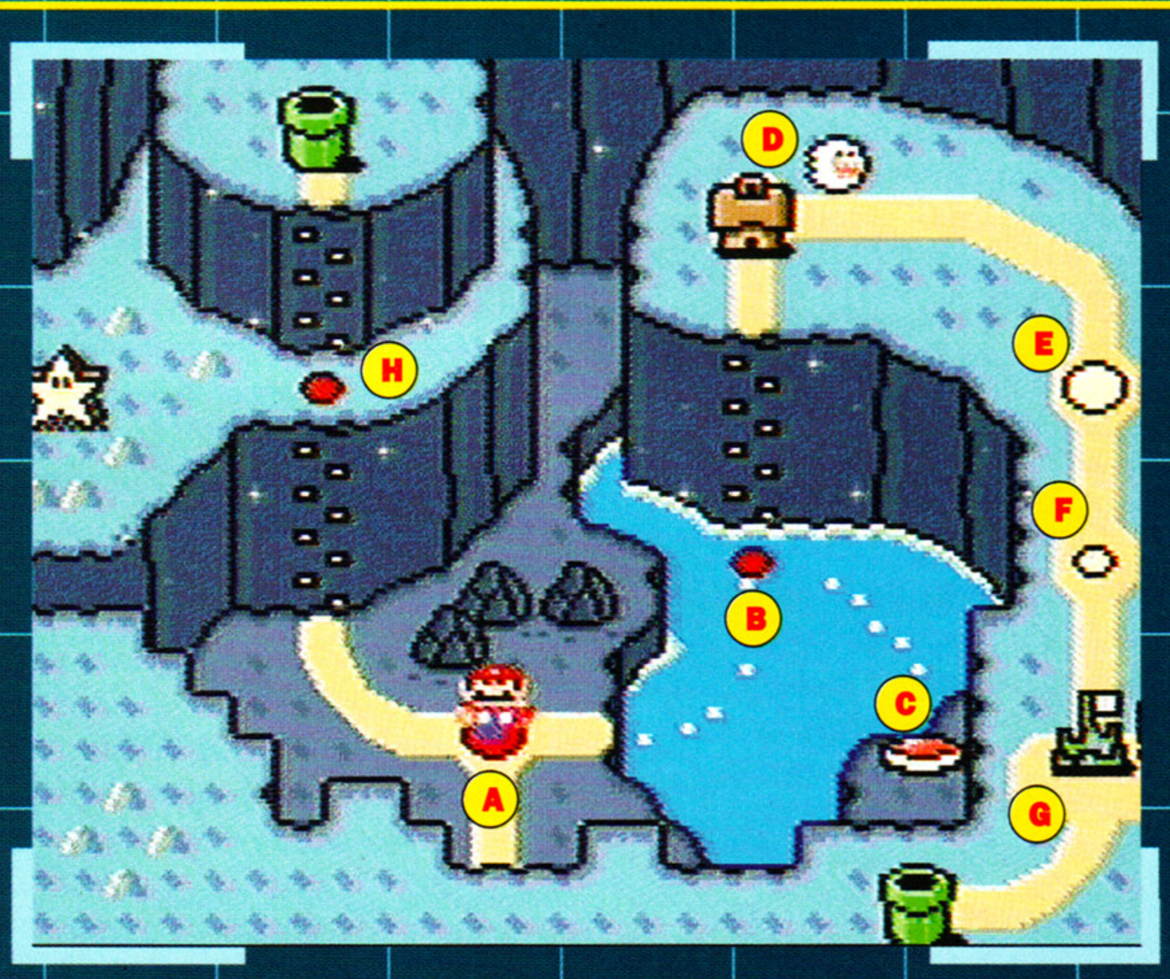
really. Jump the Blarggs when their eyes start to sink (the highest flying Prize Block is a 1-Up); fly above the orange pipes for the 1-Up Pipe; run off and then back onto the screen when you see the bouncing Koopa shell (it will stop) and throw it upwards for Yoshi. Then fly from the flat ledge near the end to find a secret tunnel.

VANILLA DOME 4

F Not much to say here, except that there's a secret lava area down the short blue pipe.

LEMMY'S CASTLE

G Try to avoid the Wizard's shots, or preferably jump on his head or even scroll him off the screen before he fires. The floating door takes you to a Midway Gate that can be reached with the P Switch, providing you don't collect the coins beneath it. This is a rather hard bit, but luckily it's not really necessary. The rest of this level is easy, including the Sliding Stairs and Lemmy, who appears out of one of the tubes with two other Koopas as decoys. Then you have to merely decide which is Lemmy and jump on his head three times to open up your path to the next level: Cookie Mountain.



World 3: The Vanilla Dome

VANILLA DOME 1

A You can collect the power-ups by breaking through the Rotating Blocks as Super Mario, but to pass them, let go of a shell below the grid and follow it as it knocks out the baddies. Use the cape to fly between the yellow pipes to reach Vanilla Secret 1 (or wait until you've found the Red Switch). Otherwise, continue right to complete the level.

VANILLA DOME 2

B And the Red Switch? To find this, swim until you see a single prize block, exit the water, then jump on the Switch once you've carried it to the wall of brown bricks to the left. Then it's simply a matter of jumping down the left hand shaft. Finding the first goal, incidentally, is a doddle.

RED SWITCH PALACE

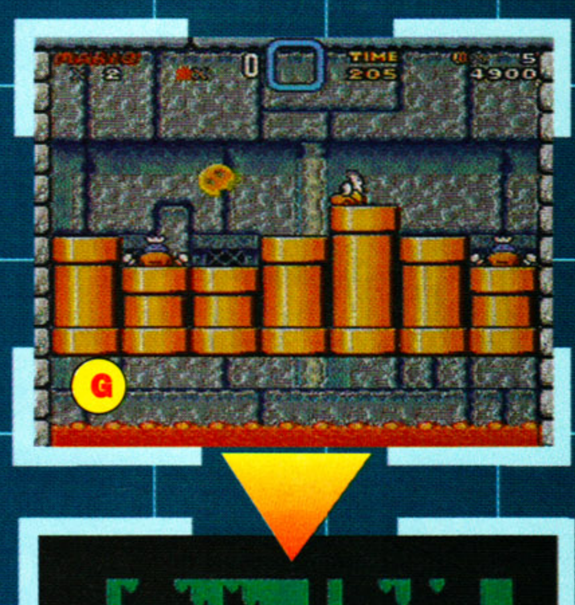
C Hit the P Switch and jump between the brown blocks. The Rainbow Koopa should follow you and knock out all the other baddies. And don't forget about the Red Switch.

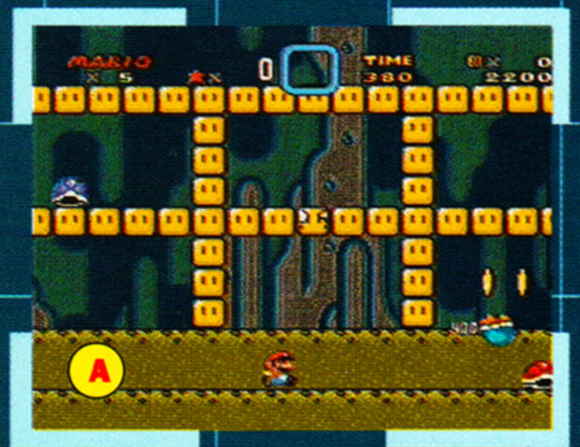
VANILLA GHOST HOUSE

D Big Boo is the main problem here, but (as with the small ghosts), if you look at him, he stops moving. The concealed vine in the Rotating Blocks is of little help, but the Switch located in the Rotating Blocks in the room with the green ectoplasm is needed to complete the level. Stand on the blocks, collect the rings to the right of the brown door, then stand on the switch and exit.

VANILLA DOME 3

This level is pretty straightforward





Hit the yellow blocks and they'll rotate to let you through.

Mario gets his feet wet, doing a spot of Olympic-style swimming.

Watch out for Koopas in the Red Switch Palace, and hit that Red Switch!

Be careful of the undead baddies here in Lemmy's Palace.

WORLD (Continued)

VANILLA SECRET 1

The only real tough part of this level is jumping through the six Koopas with the spring board. The green pipe to the left takes you to another green pipe leading to Star World. If you've found the Blue Switch then you can reach it with the jumping board. Otherwise use the cape.

VANILLA SECRET 2

Take out the green Koopas by a) collecting Yoshi from the first prize block or b) collecting a cape, and c) bouncing from them one by one (you'll start to score 1-Ups if you don't hit the ground). Oh, and hit the Rotating Blocks above the spikes for a Silver P Switch to turn all the spikes into silver coins.

VANILLA SECRET 3

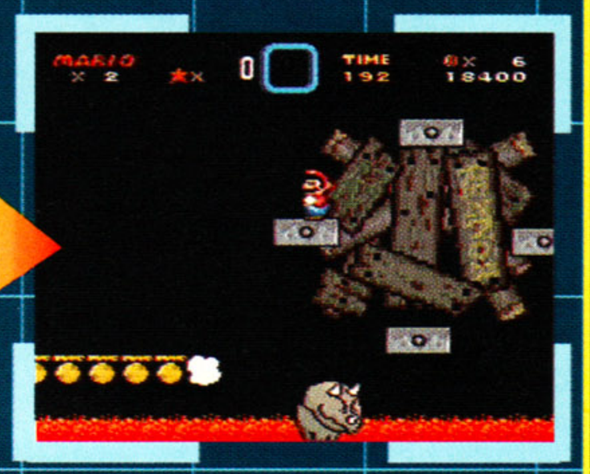
F Flying Dolphins. Need we say more? (You've probably worked out that you can ride them.)

Mario hitches a lift on one of these lovely flying dolphins in World 3.

VANILLA FORTRESS

The bottom route under the yellow spikes is preferable to the upper route, although there's not much in it. Reznor is relatively easy to beat – hit one or more of the Rhinos from underneath, jump onto a free platform when the ledge starts to disappear and hit the remaining Rhinos from underneath.

The only way to get rid of this four-headed beastie is to hit from below...



Once you've successfully decapitated him, you've cleared the Fortress.

World 4: Cookie Mountain

CHEESE BRIDGE AREA

D The quickest way to complete this area is to take Yoshi in with you, ride the highest moving platform and collect His Wings shortly afterwards. But to reach Soda Lake you'll need the cape (from the start of the level) to swoop under the first Giant Gate and arrive at a 3-Up moon and a second goal.

SODA LAKE

A few Power-Ups from, say, the beginning of the level before would

E come in handy here, so that you can Cape or shoot the fish – or in case you get in line with the torpedoes. (Just try to stay out of line with the torpedoes, okay?) Complete this level to open up Star World 3.

COOKIE MOUNTAIN

F A couple of debuts on this level. The fire-dropping Sumo Brothers are one; hit them from below or Cape them. New, also, are the pink apples; eat two on a level and each face dropped by the resulting Smiley Face Cloud will be worth 100 points, and an extra life if you catch all 10! Specifically for this level, use the red Koopa shell to clear a path through the moles, climb the group of four rotating blocks for a 1-Up – and don't forget to go down the blue pipe.

BUTTER BRIDGE 1

A Damn tricky best describes this scrolling level, especially when you plummet to your death for the 100,000,000th time. Keep jumping on the tall platforms to prevent them from sinking, and use the Koopas to cross the larger gaps. Oh, yes. And practice a lot.

A difficult one this. Just keep jumping on those tall platforms.

World 5: The Forest of Illusion

FOREST OF ILLUSION 1

A The Wigglers can only be eaten by Yoshi or hit with a shell (else they turn red, and deadly). Look for a single Prize Block under the log section, collect the P balloon and float left for a short cut to the Ghost House. You will want to find goal one first, though.

BUTTER BRIDGE 2

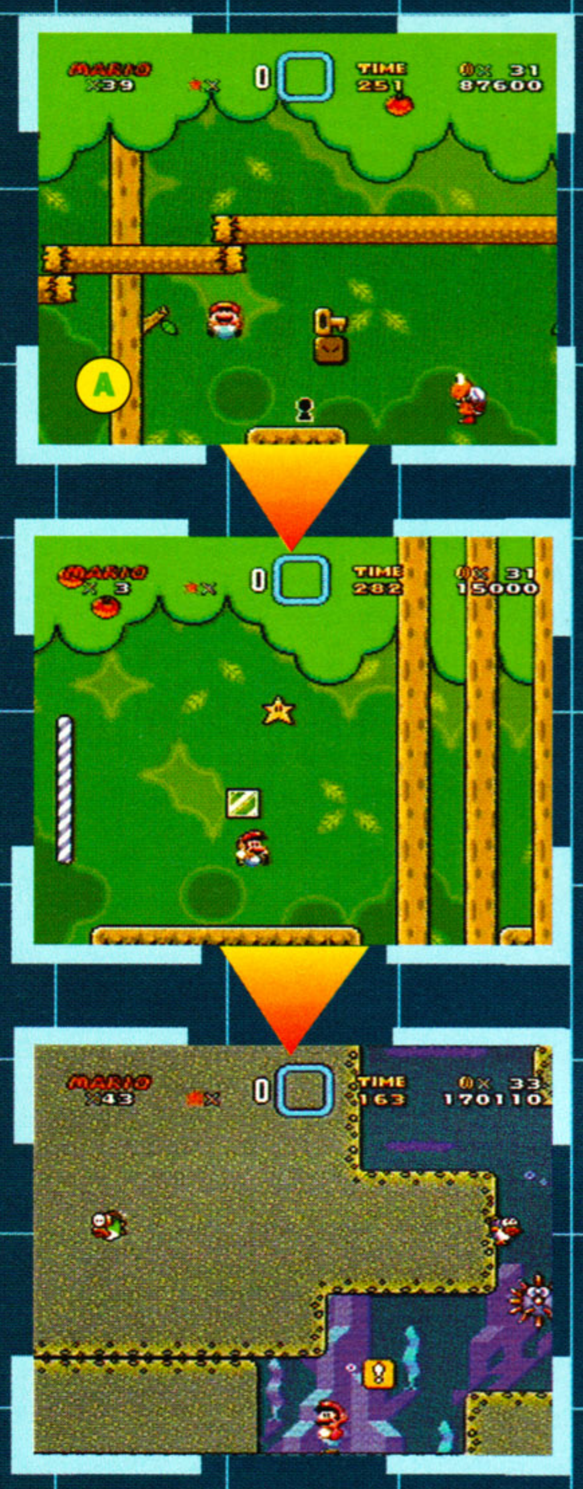
B With Butter Bridge 1 behind you, you're through the worst of it. Indeed, you can simply fly across all of Butter Bridge 2 with the cape – a good job, as it's unlikely that you'll be bothered to do any exploring.

LUDWIG'S CASTLE

C There are three stages to this castle. Stage one: Ball 'n' Chains. Don't forget that the chain part is perfectly safe to walk though. Stage two: The spiky enclosing ceiling. Find the Switch and turn it off at the last minute to give you time to leg it to the left. Stage three: Simply climb upwards. As for Ludwig, avoid his fireballs and jump on his head, but watch out when he rolls at you.

Ludwig von Koopa's a nasty fire-breathing piece of work.

SUPER MARIO



Your enemies in the Forest Of Illusion 1 include deceptively cute Wigglers.

Once you have, restart the level, touch the Midway Gate, collect the Super Star (knock it out when it's a feather) and leg it left – the Koopas become 1-Ups and the Wigglers become 2-Ups. You can collect up to 17 lives and repeat the whole process (don't finish the level, though) for up to 99 lives.

Also, in the section with the Koopas on the logs, float down onto a Wiggler with the cape and jump up onto another one. Providing you don't hit the ground in between (but float from the screen to reset the Wigglers to their original yellow state) your score will start to turn into weird symbols, and in under three minutes to the maximum value of 99,999,990!

FOREST OF ILLUSION 2

C Grab the cape to kill the fish, and use Grab Blocks to kill sea urchins and increase your speed. Keep to the bottom until you reach a small chamber – hit the third invisible block and wait for the extra life to fall. Near the end of the level, look for a single yellow exclamation block – the wall to the left is false and leads to the Blue Switch Palace. (You saw it on GamesMaster...)

FOREST OF ILLUSION 3

D Two goals here leading to the Ghost House and Roy's Castle. This level also introduces bubblified exploding bombs – best avoided. Don't forget to visit the second pipe and collect the pink apples, but ignore the large group of prize blocks (they all contain coins only). And the secret goal leading to Roy's Castle? Why, it's down the tall green pipe nearest the end.

FOREST GHOST HOUSE

D Run to the right past the first section. Find the P Switch to the right, take it to the left of the brown door, then collect the coins and stamp on the Switch to reveal a blue door. Go through this door and run to the left. The first door is the main exit, but the door further along provides you with a lock and key.

FOREST OF ILLUSION 4

E You have to find the second goal on this area, else you get taken back to area two of the Forest – it's down the small mid-air blue pipe shortly after the midway gate. To reach it, either use the cape or the cloud. Oh, and avoid collecting the 1-Up from the angler at the beginning or he'll start firing spiky things at you...

FOREST SECRET AREA

F Er, apart from making you feel rather queasy, there's nothing much to this flying-platform level. If you've collected the cape earlier on then you can fly up and over the Giant Gate to collect the three Extra Mario Mushrooms.

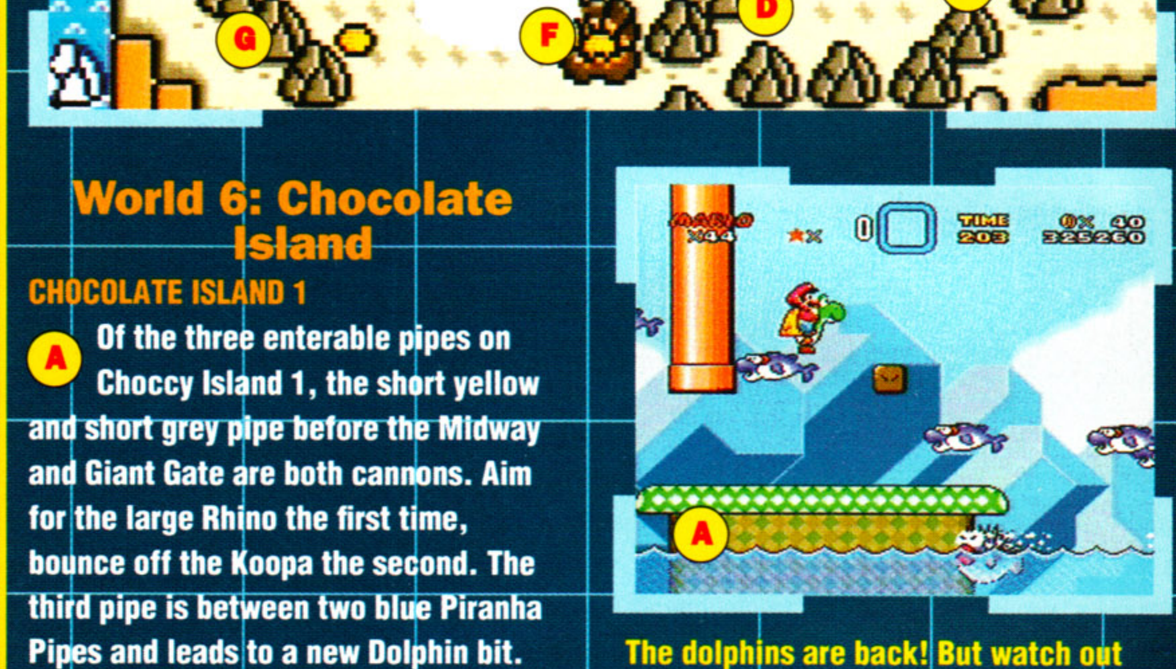
FOREST FORTRESS

Fly to the Giant Gate, with the help of the Cape collected earlier.

G In the second area, wait until both Grinders in the pit are going to the left and leg it. This is another level to really learn your way through on your own – tips won't be of much use. That said, though, did you know that you can reach a secret second red door with nine extra lives by flying from the ledge above the first red door? Complete this and you'll open up another entrance to Star World.

ROY'S CASTLE

H The Brown Block Snake is quite easy to get the hang of, but watch out for the fireballs and falling spikes. Oh, and you may find it helpful to initially jump on the green block to pass the third Koopa statue. Roy attacks in the same way as Morton, the big difference being that the walls are closing in on you, so try to lure him down to one side of the screen.



World 6: Chocolate Island

CHOCOLATE ISLAND 1

A Of the three enterable pipes on Choccy Island 1, the short yellow and short grey pipe before the Midway and Giant Gate are both cannons. Aim for the large Rhino the first time, bounce off the Koopa the second. The third pipe is between two blue Piranha Pipes and leads to a new Dolphin bit.

CHOCCO-GHOST HOUSE

B The first half of the House is a simple run right job, watching out for the baddy dangling the deadly flame. The three grey blocks through the door turn into ghosts when you look away; lead them underneath the door to the right, and use them as stepping stones to reach the goal.

The dolphins are back! But watch out for those damn piranhas...

Not a place for claustrophobia sufferers, this, when the walls start closing in...

CHOCOLATE ISLAND 2

C A strange area, this, because your course changes depending on the number of coins collected and the time remaining. To find the key you'll have to complete the first two sections with at least 250 left on the timer. Reaching the normal goal is easy, but note that section two will change if you collect all the coins (including the hidden one below the prize block) on section one.

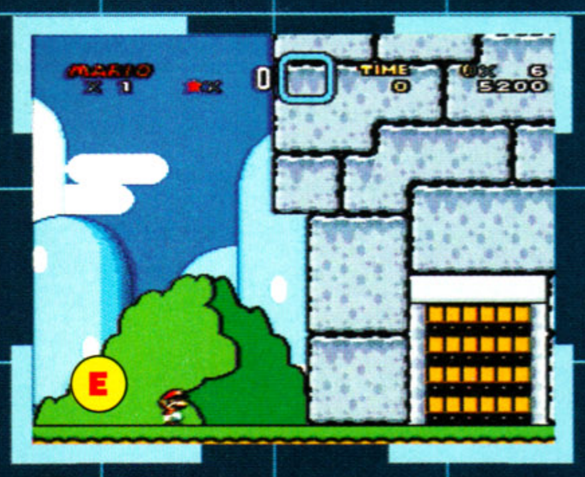
CHOCOLATE ISLAND 3

D Hop along the spinning platforms to the first blue pipe for a bonus coin area. You'll need to find the secret area to advance – for this you'll need the cape (from the Green Bonus Block) to fly underneath the Giant Gate to a 3-Up moon and Giant Gate number 2.

CHOCOLATE FORTRESS

E Nasty, this. There are spikes, there are fireballs, and there are rocks waiting to squash you. And Reznor is waiting for you at the end.

WORLD (Continued)



Reznor the dinosaur makes his appearance here.

CHOCOLATE ISLAND 4

F Get the cape for this level to make the most of the grey pipe. Collect the three green mushrooms, activate the concealed Switch Block and, once down the pipe, hit the second P Switch. Fall down the right side and fly up and collect the power ups. If you haven't got the cape, jump seven counts of your timer after hitting the second and you'll land next to a cape to fly up with.

CHOCOLATE ISLAND 5

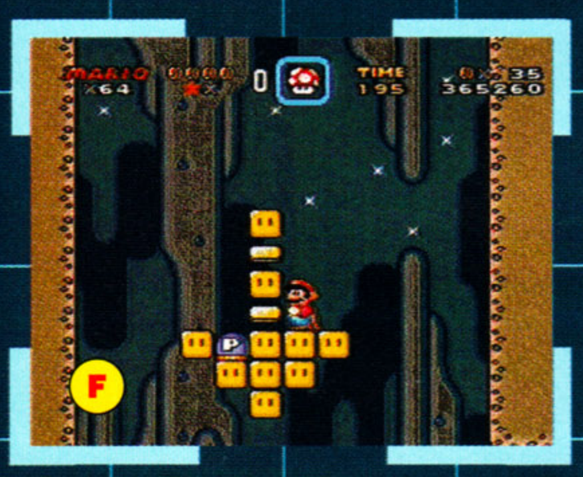
G Use the cape to collect the silver Switch from the cloud ledge at the beginning of the level. Bring it down to ground level, use it, then use the blue Switch and the spikes will be turned into silver coins. Collect all the coins and you can go down the yellow 1-Up pipe, returning left afterwards if you want to look down the second yellow pipe.

CHOCOLATE SECRET

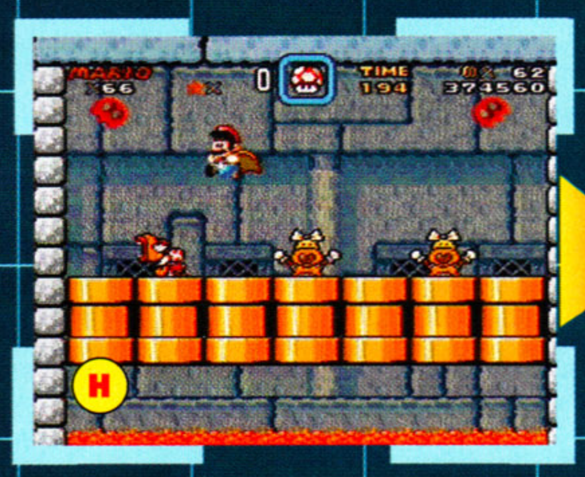
Don't bother with the green pipe on the first section, as it's a bit tricky (full of falling platforms and Hammer Brothers) and there's nothing to collect. On the second section, press down on the controller at the start of the hill and you'll slide down on yer bot. And you'll have to run over the sinking sand bars on section three or you'll, er, die.

Weave your watery way through these spooky spectres.

Fall down a narrow shaft and touch the green sphere to enter a new world...



Here's another game area where that cape comes in jolly handy.



Wendy's a bit of a toughie, she's filled this bit with some nasty surprises.

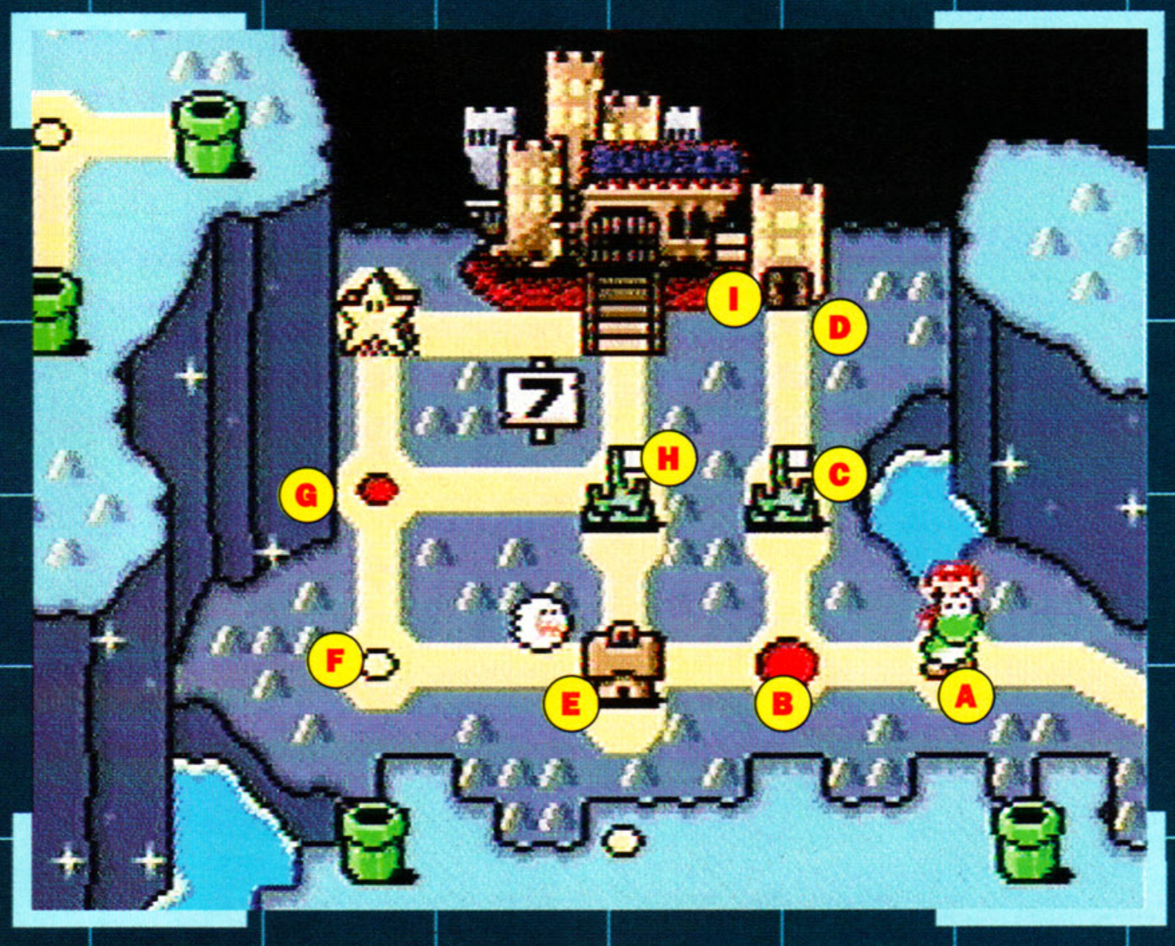
WENDY'S CASTLE

H Obviously not taking too kindly to intruders, Wendy has littered her castle with undead baddies, spikes, Grinders and Sparkies. In some cases you'll need to stand between two spikes and jump over the Grinder, but this shouldn't pose too much of a problem. Defeating Wendy is much the same as defeating Lemmy, only this time you have two fireballs to contend with as well as two decoys. Hopefully no problem.

Hoorah! Our hero has met the challenge and outwitted Wendy.

SUNKEN GHOST SHIP

I The second part of the ship is hard – very hard. The ghosts all appear simultaneously, but leave a gap sufficient for you to swim through every other time they form. So swim when the gap is there – hover while you're waiting (moving out the way of any forming ghosts). The next stage is great – a huge fall leading to a platform (if you stay in the middle) with another Super Star on. (Why not come back and try this level with the Cape?) Swim to the bottom for two extra Marios, and hit the question mark to exit.



World 7 – The Valley of Bowser

VALLEY OF BOWSER 1

A Bring in the cape to Spin through the Footie Players and Moles. Also; catch a lift across the pit of black flowers on top of a Mole; take the highest tunnels to find the Midway Gate; fly to the right of the black flowers for a 3-Up moon; jump from below to fill the gap in the tunnel floor about halfway through and (and!) look out for a single Rotating Block near the end goal for a vine leading to a 1-Up Pipe.

VALLEY OF BOWSER 2

B Hit, then jump immediately onto, the single Prize Block to avoid the coloured shell. Or bring in Yoshi, eat the shell and (if desired) collect His Wings from just through the green pipe to skip the remains of the level. You'll need to (carefully) negotiate the sand maze to find the secret exit though. (Jump first from the extreme left of this section for a cape.) Then on section three, run quickly until the first sand bar is out of view, return (the sand will be gone) and use the platform as a run-up to fly up and left out of and onto the right side of the tunnel.

VALLEY FORTRESS

C The sneaky thing is that this fortress is easier to complete without the collectable cape, which otherwise reduces your falling speed and makes the spikes harder to pass. (It might be a good idea to Power Up with red mushrooms from another level first, though.) You'll need to be running to survive the initial set of three spikes – the key to passing the set of quick spikes near the end is to run slightly before they even start moving upwards. Reznor is easy to kill (again) – you'll then be taken to The Back Door of Bowser's Castle.

THE BACK DOOR

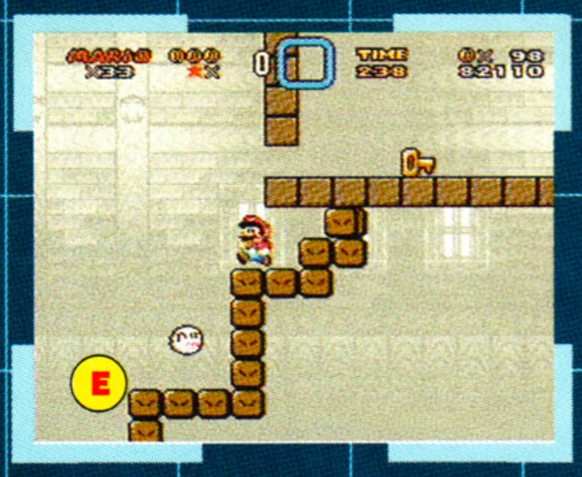
D There isn't really any great challenge to this level, as it mainly serves as an introduction to the Mechakoopas who – by jumping on, stunning and throwing upwards – you will be killing Bowser with presently.

Mario's in the spotlight, here, as he meets the Mechakoopas.

VALLEY GHOST HOUSE

E Hit the P Switch on the section past the green blobs to create two ledges with six doors, leading (taking the doors in order from left to right) to either the right side of the coin snake room, the exit, the exit again and the left side of the coin snake room (with a green mushroom). You want the short cut to Larry's Castle? Take this last door, then carry the P Switch until you are underneath the coin snake block, facing right. Hit the block, immediately hit the P Switch, and jump on the resulting bridge (it should be going

SUPER MARIO



Mario's got six doors to choose from in the Ghost House.

right). Steer the snake to form the sharpest steps possible to reach an entrance to a chamber. Only small Mario will fit through – Super Mario can slide through with a run up, but starting the snake as small Mario is heartily recommended.

VALLEY OF BOWSER 3

F There's not much we can say about this bit, except, er, it's easy.

VALLEY OF BOWSER 4

G Go down the green pipe for Power Up purposes and spin through the large shaft of Rotating Blocks (fall down the narrow shaft and aim left if you are small Mario). Beyond the Midway gate, stand to the left of the wall in front of Chuck, run and jump against the wall to avoid the boulder, then run and jump over him onto the platform. All the other Chucks can be run past, except the last which you should spring over. Using the cape (from the yellow Bonus Block) to pass the large lava pit is easier than jumping on the Koopa. You'll need Yoshi to eat the key to open up Star World.

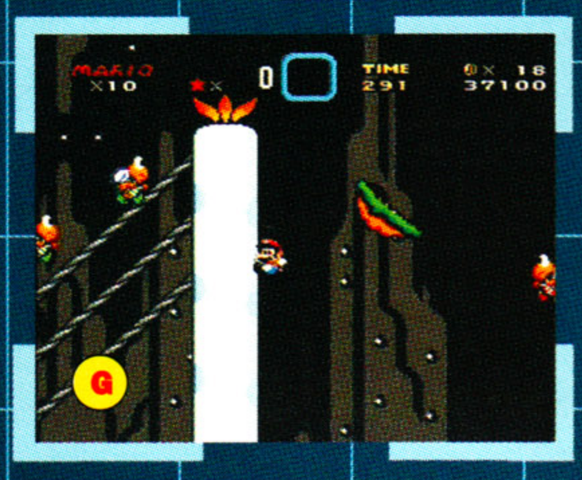
LARRY'S CASTLE

H You could try to fly section one, but to be honest, getting to grips with the brown snake really isn't that hard. (Keep standing on it as it moves upwards.) The Magikoopa makes his return here – you may need his shots to blast through the Rotating Block walls.

Defeating Larry is much the same as defeating Iggy, but here stand about a third of the way along the platform to avoid the fireballs from the lava.

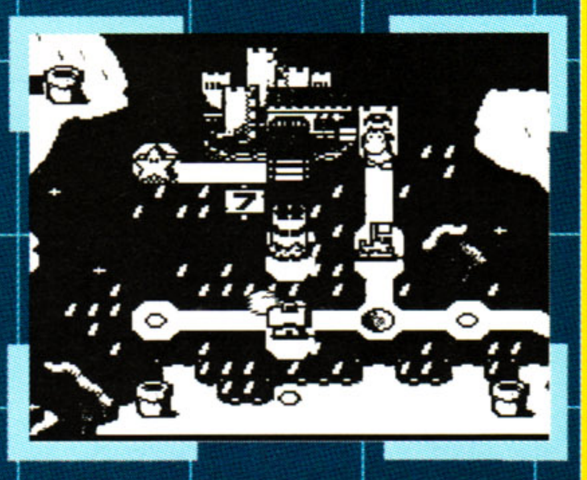
BOWSER'S CASTLE

From the initial choice of four doors, take door three (Koopa Camouflage) as this is the only section with a collectable power up (if a camouflage square has holes, you can jump through it) – the higher of the two furthermost camouflage squares contains a feather. Take door one of the next choice of four doors to the Spike Sprint – as soon as the vicious spikes start to rise, wait for the counter to decrease by two, then leg it. The third section is effectively the Back Door level – the only advantage of reaching Bowser via the front door is the chance to collect a feather on the way.



Chucks attack by rolling boulders at you with their shovels.

The Brown Block Snake reappears to make life more difficult.



The Back Door to Bowser, but no feather if you go this way.

Star Road

STAR WORLD 1

This entire world is a downwards trip through layers of Rotating Blocks. Every one of the Star Worlds has two goals – you need to find the hidden goal on each to open up the next Star World, but to register all 96 goals you'll have to go through both. Here, goal one is at the bottom, while goal two is found by breaking through the Blocks to the far right.

STAR WORLD 2

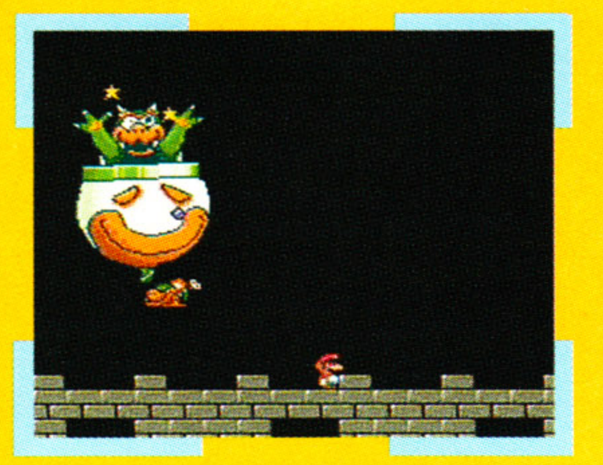
Star Road also introduces you to the coloured Yoshis – there was a hidden Red Yoshi to be found on the previous world, but here Baby Blue Yoshi is rather more obvious. Feed him the Super Star and he will grow instantly. Swim along off the top of the screen (if you're feeling really lazy) and enter the green pipe for goal one, or swim under it for goal two.

STAR WORLD 3

The normal goal shouldn't be too tricky to find (hem), nor should the hidden one. Feed Yoshi five dropping Spinys, use the Silver P Switch, collect the coins, pick up one of the Grab Blocks you're standing on (simply press X or Y), jump onto the high Grab

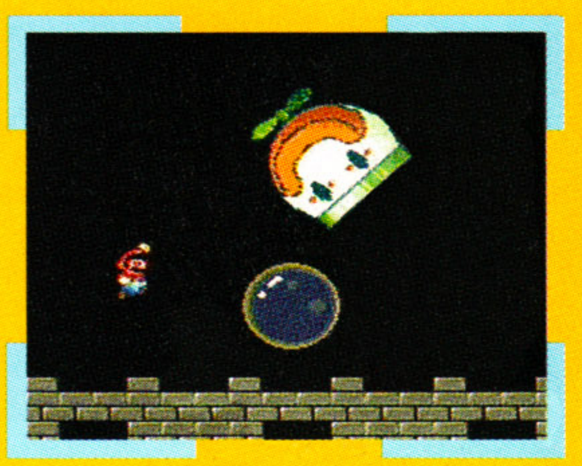
Bowser

What? You want me to tell you how to kill him? And spoil all the fun? Okay, Bowser only requires six hits to kill and comes at you in three waves, switching after two hits. In the first he'll move left and right only, so your only road to death will be collision with the rotor blade or one of the baddies he throws out. Instantly kill the first baddy that lands (to avoid collision), stun the other and throw it so that it hopefully lands on his head. The subsequent fireball attack can be avoided by standing to the right of the screen and jumping as far to the left as possible when one is about to hit you. Now stay at the far right as Bowser hovers. When he stops, run to the left, then run back to the right to jump the first boulder he throws, remaining to the right for the second. For this wave Bowser attacks in a two-boulder, two-baddy pattern. In the third he'll bounce at you instead, stopping every now and then to throw out two baddies which, in case you hadn't realised, is your chance to kill the bast.

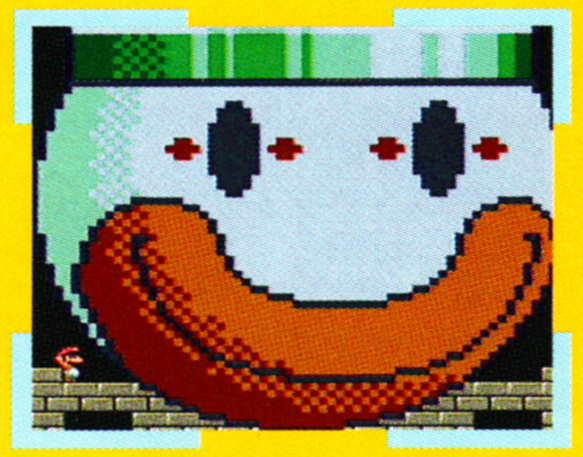


Bowser's kidnapped Princess Toadstool and has her trapped in this clown's head. If you want the princess back, you're going to have to get Bowser first.

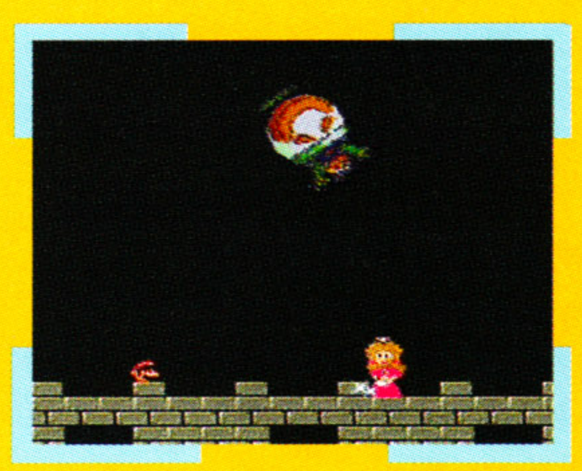
Bowser can only release two Mechakoopas at a time. You can either kill them, or stun them and throw them back at Bowser.



Yikes! Bowser turns his clown's head upside down and drops a huge boulder on you. Jump over it, and then watch out for the other one.



Dwarfed by the massive clown, Mario looks totally bemused. 'I know it's just more Mode 7 trickery,' he thinks, 'but it's still horribly scary.'



Safe at last! Princess Toadstool drops out of the clown's head and into Mario's arms. 'Oof! He certainly hasn't been starving you, has he?' remarks Mario.

Hurrah! It's party time! 'Thank you,' says the Princess, and well she might. 'This is absolutely the last time,' replies Mario, utterly exhausted.

WORLD (Continued)

The map of the Star Worlds, shaped (spook!) like a giant star. How's Mario going to get round this lot?

Blocks, use it to knock the bloke out of the cloud, hop in and float up left.

STAR WORLD 4

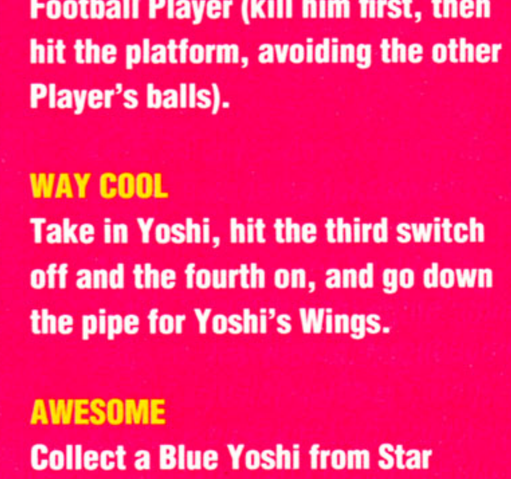
Pick up the baby Yoshi, feed him five Koopas, then use a blue Koopa from the quadruple green platform to soar to the right. Keep the platforms in view and by the time Yoshi swallows you should land on a green platform a short distance from a set of revolving platforms. Jump right until you reach the orange pipe and leave Yoshi by the keyhole on the exclamation platform below. Throw the red Koopa shell at the prize block, re-mount Yoshi, collect the key and away you go.

STAR WORLD 5

You'll need a cape and a run-up from the start of the level to reach the second goal. Stay as high as you can, maintaining your altitude long enough to reach the ledge of yellow exclamation marks. Then just run right along the ledge, ducking with a run-up to slide under through the small gaps. Soaring through the level is the easiest method to reaching goal one as well.

Special Zones on the Star Road have these nifty 'night sky' backdrops...

...not to mention lots of dangerous drops it's possible to fall down!



Nearly at the end now – no wonder Mario's jumping for joy!

collect) from under the lower Football Player (kill him first, then hit the platform, avoiding the other Player's balls).

WAY COOL

Take in Yoshi, hit the third switch off and the fourth on, and go down the pipe for Yoshi's Wings.

AWESOME

Collect a Blue Yoshi from Star World 2 and eat loads of Koopa shells – including the yellow one just before you collect the Star. The jump onto the final blue block, bouncing off a Koopa, can be avoided with the cape.

GROOVY

Throw the Koopa shell at the prize block for Yoshi. Don't kill the two Chucks at the end though – use your temporary invulnerability if you are hit and leg it.

MONDO

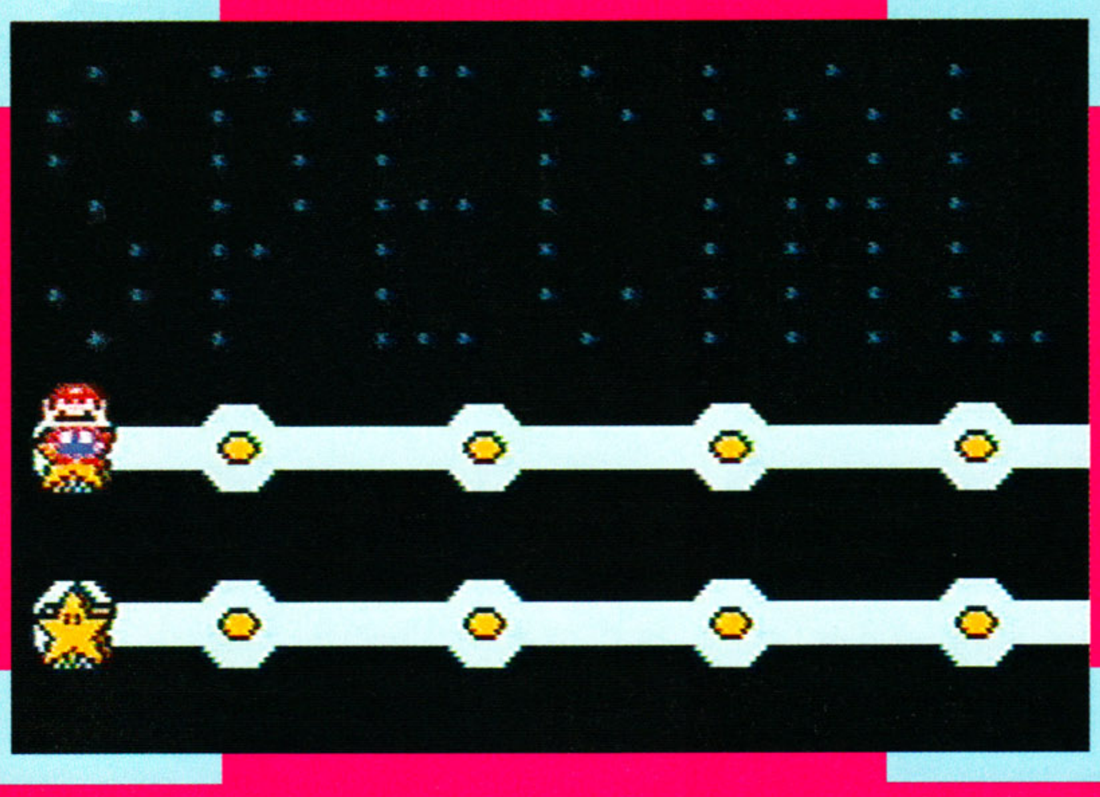
The stranded fish are harmless, but the swimming ones deadly. Yoshi is available from the highest of the three Prize blocks, but more easily obtained from Groovy beforehand. The left blue pipe is a short cut, and there is a Power Up on the top row of Prize Blocks.

OUTRAGEOUS

(Aren't you bored of *Super Mario World*, yet?) Use the cape to soar through the whole level.

FUNKY

Okay, we're nearly at the end of the game, but there's still plenty of exciting stuff to find. Try leaving the music on the Special World map, for instance. That's all. Bye!



Once you've completed the Star Road (see map at top of page) you enter the Special Zone – each stop on the road above is a very hard, completely new, level. (Eek!)

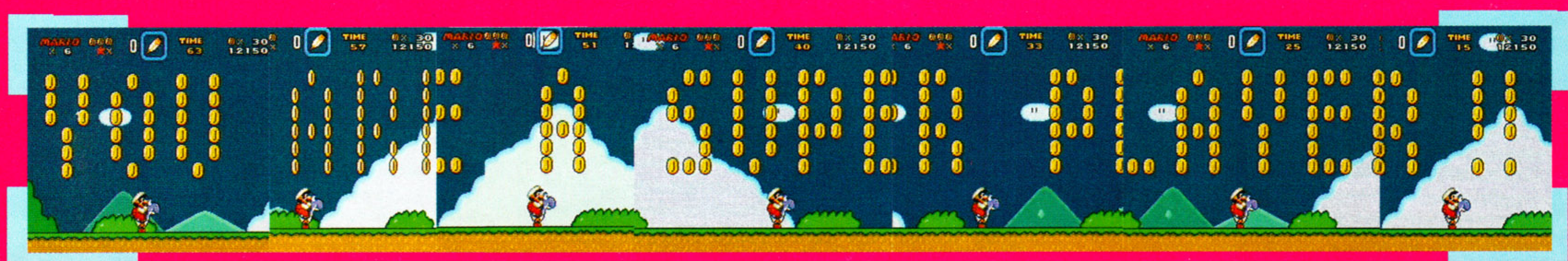
The Special Zone

GNARLY

Use the P Switch from the Rotating Block, with the Red Koopa flying above, before leaping down and to the right to go through the green pipe. When you come out of the silver pipe, run to the right for three invisible 1-Ups. Squash both Blue Switches to create the platform on section 2, and use the Silver Switch to turn the spiky baddies into silver coins after knocking the Hammer Man from his platform.

TUBULAR

Consecutive balloons must be collected to make it through this level – the first from above the spring board, the second from a highly placed Prize Block to the right and the third (and very hard to



THE IREM SKINS GAME

US Release

Game: The Irem Skins Game
Publisher: Irem
Developer: Irem America
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Available now
Players: 1 to 4
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

If you fancied a round of golf you'd probably head for your local amusement arcade. If it's got a *Major Title* machine, that is. And now here's the conversion. Will it leap to the 'fore' of SNES golfing games?

Above: What a bunker! This sort of thing's in any SNES golf game, but doesn't always look this good. Check out that reflection! Right: Putting is made a great deal easier with this overhead view.

You're given four characters to choose from. While they have different skills, they all have one thing in common: appalling dress sense.

There are four types of game: Skins Game, where you win $10,000 per hole; Match Play, where the winner wins most holes; Stroke Play, where the winner takes the fewest strokes, and Tournament.

JONATHAN (HURRAH!) VS JASON (BOO!)

1 Good afternoon, and welcome to round 1 of the *Super Play* Cup.

2 As the favourite (in all senses), Jonathan's in a buoyant mood this beautiful afternoon.

5 Oh dear – he's in the rough. Jason throws his club to the ground. Temper, temper!

6 The sun slips behind a cloud, and Jason's afternoon goes from bad to worse.

CHECKING OUT THE COMPETITION

The Americans and Japanese are potty about golf, and there's consequently quite a range of games to choose from. The first to appear was HAL's *Hole-in-One*, which adopts a straightforward overhead view of the course, and plays very much like an arcade game. The more recent games (*Irem Skins* included) have tended to go for a player's-point-of-view approach, which looks much more realistic, but can slow things down.

JACK NICKLAUS GOLF
(Tradewest)

The graphics look really nice... once they've been drawn. Trouble is, the game takes so long to do this that it's virtually unplayable. 62%

PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS
(T&E Soft)

Along with *Augusta Masters* and *Waialae Country Club*, (previously) the best on the market. Nice graphics and really playable, if a little slow. 82%

PGA TOUR GOLF
(Electronic Arts)

On other machines this is brilliant. The Super Nintendo conversion is a let-down, however, unfortunately looking horribly naff. 60%

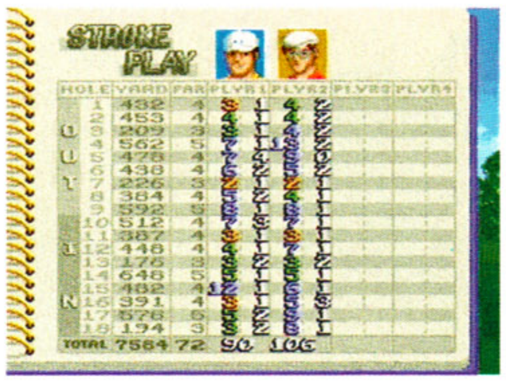
HOLE-IN-ONE GOLF
(HAL)

Lots of Mode 7 whizzing about that'll impress onlookers, and really good fun to play. Not much of a 'golfing' feel, though. 79%

SUPER BIRDIE RUSH
(Data East)

The same simple overhead approach as *Hole-in-One*, but with cute characters, nice graphics and – oops – loads of Japanese text. 76%

Aren't those reflections of clouds on the water nice? (I thought so, anyway.)



Facts 'n' figures fans will feel right at home with these score sheets.

3 Marvellous shot. Jonathan tips his cap to the crowd and sets off down the fairway.

4 Jason steps up to the tee. Is that a hiss coming from the crowd, or just the breeze?

7 Meanwhile, Jonathan's on the green, and that putt's looking good. Steady, steady...

8 It's in! Jonathan picks up the prize money. (*It didn't happen like this at all – Jason.*)

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

I think it's fair to say that you'll only ever buy one golf game. It's not that, having bought one, you'll never want to see another one ever again. It's just that, unlike shoot-'em-ups, or driving games, or beat-'em-ups, all golf games basically do the same job, and having two would be largely pointless. What you want, then, is to buy just the one, but make sure it's the best one. So which *is* the best game?

Well, so far every SNES 3D golf game has suffered from the same problem: after you've hit the ball, it takes so long to draw the view from the ball's new position that you very quickly get bored of waiting each time. However, *Irem Skins* suffers no such problem. Each screen appears instantaneously, and, what's more, as you line up your shot the view rotates around really smoothly. It's a splendid effect, making excellent use of Mode 7. The graphics look really nice, too, especially the way the horizon is reflected in lakes and rivers. The only minor snag is that, as it is in Mode 7, there are no hills or dips, and bunkers look more like sandpits. Gameplay wise it's great, too. We had loads of fun with it. The fast pace really helps, and the controls are nice and easy to use. (Though not so simple that they make the game too easy.)

Irem Skins isn't quite perfect, though. For a start, the ball doesn't behave quite as realistically as it might – when you whack it onto the green, it just lands and stops dead, rather than rolling along for a bit. And only having one course might be seen as a little restrictive by some, though very few SNES games actually have more than one. *PGA Tour* is an exception (though not a very good one). And, speaking of which, *PGA Tour Golf* on the PC or the Amiga probably remains the king of all golf games – it's just a shame the Super NES version is so lacklustre.

So I think it's safe to say that *Irem Skins* is your best bet if you're looking for a Super NES golf game. We like the sheer playability of *Hole-in-One*, but *Skins* seems to strike a better balance between graphics, gameplay and that essential feeling that you're actually out there on the fairway, playing golf for real.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87%	76%	81%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
86%	83%	

VERDICT: There are lots of really good golf games on the SNES, but this is probably the best of them. It's really slick, and has a great golfing atmosphere, but it's a shame there's only one course.

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles, (081) 340 8565, for lending us the cart.

SPIDERMAN & THE X-MEN

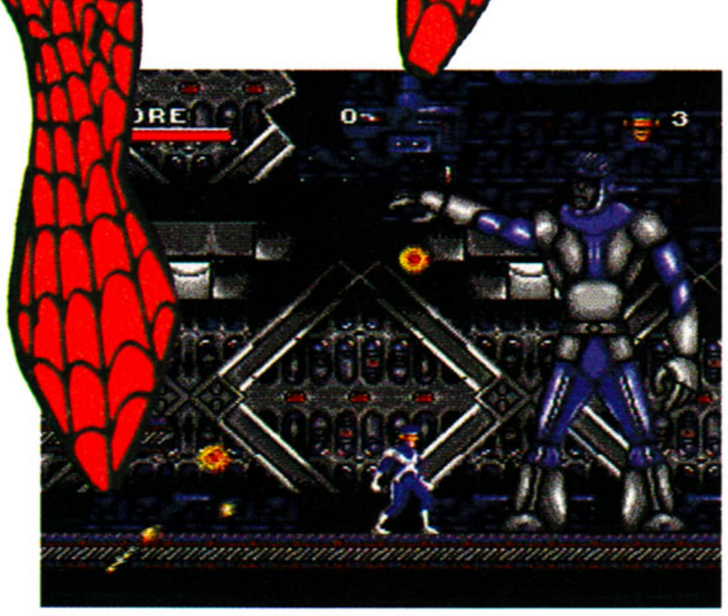
IN ARCADE'S REVENGE

UK Release

Game: Spiderman & The X-Men in Arcade's Revenge
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Software Creations
Price: £49.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit

The *X-Men* has been America's biggest selling comic for about 10 years now, while Spiderman is currently riding the crest of his own popularity wave, with no less than four monthly books dedicated to him – this game will shift copies in America, and no mistake. Over here, though, it's got to stand on its own two feet, which could cause a few problems...

Though you wouldn't think so to look at him, Spidey is 30 years old this year (and, as he was at least 16 in his first appearance, that would make him mid-40s now in real-life terms!)



X-Man Cyclops faces off against a giant Sentinel robot, which chucks fireballs and rockets at him.

This comic style intro sequence kicks off the game, as Spidey investigates the devious Arcade.

The plot is simple: Arcade (not the most mainstream of super villains, but he fits the purposes of the plot, as we'll explain in a minute) has captured our X-Men chums for purposes unclear, and it's down to Spiderman to rescue them. Of course, being heroes, the X-Men aren't taking it sitting down – each one of them is trying to fight his way to freedom through Arcade's Murderworld, a kind of homicidal version of Disneyland. And, even more obviously, this being a SNES platform game, you get to control each hero in turn. Over the next couple of pages we'll look at how they all stack up...

SPIDERMAN

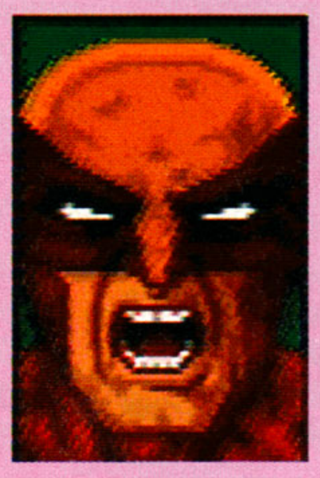
Everybody knows and loves old Spidey. High school student and (later) freelance photographer by day, masked web-slinger by night, and long-suffering nephew to the always-at-death's-door Aunt May *all* the time, Spiderman is one of the mainstays of the so-called Marvel Universe. His super-powers give him the proportionate strength and agility of a (rather large) spider, apparently gained through an unlikely accident involving a radioactive spider's teeth and a foolishly bared wrist. In the game this translates into the ability to jump great distances, climb up walls and fire two types of web – short destructive bursts (which are never seen in the comics, incidentally) and long lines which he uses to swing across wide gaps.

Spiderman's first level is a running-jumping-and-swinging-around-searching-for-flashing-blue-boxes-dotted-around-an-abandoned-warehouse-cum-underground-complex affair. Assorted robots guard the boxes, Spidey uses his spider sense to tell him which one has to be destroyed next (they have to be done in order or they'll explode or something), and while some of the swinging about is good fun, it all gets a bit repetitive pretty fast. Annoyingly, Spidey can't climb across ceilings, jump some very small distances, or get round the odd overhang – things he could easily manage in the comics. Still, at least a three storey fall doesn't kill him.

The second section – a building site packed with even more robots – is incredibly difficult. It's also one of those very annoying levels where you very nearly finish it but can't get to that crucial last baddy because the layout of the map won't let you – so you have to go all the way back to the beginning again and work your way around. Still, at least this'll keep you occupied for quite a good while...

Left: Spidey swings around the place, searching for those blue box thingies.
Below: The second level's set in this building site, again packed with robots, but also featuring an incredibly confusing map.

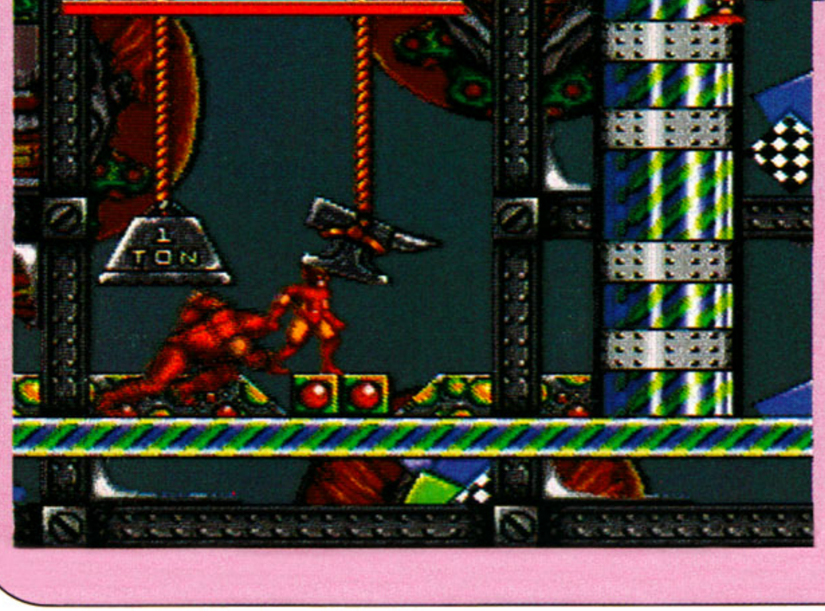
WOLVERINE



So popular he supports a handful of comics on his own, Wolverine was one of the big success stories of the '80s. Semi-psychotic heroes abound in comics at the moment, but he was the first – a mysterious ex-secret agent, blessed at birth with incredible stamina and self-healing abilities, then transformed into a human killing machine by the addition of an unbreakable metal skeleton and razor-sharp claws. While most heroes were rather goody-goody, this guy looked like he might actually kill someone – and did.

Wolverine's first level is set in an oversized toy shop, packed with machine gun toting jack-in-the-boxes, vicious clowns and homicidal toy soldiers. He doesn't have long range weapons, so he must get up close to slash them with his claws.

In the second of his levels, Wolverine is up against Juggernaut, an incredibly powerful super villain who's so strong, one touch is enough to kill our boy. It's another race against time section – Wolvie has to run right towards the exit, hopefully blocking the path (and thus slowing down) the Juggernaut at his heels.



Wolverine's got no time for clowning around in this deceptively friendly-looking toy shop. It's full of nasty surprises (including a rampaging Juggernaut!)

Ten years at the top:
Marvel Comics ultra-successful *X-Men*. On this recent cover we've got Cyclops in his new costume, plus Wolverine, Gambit, Beast (the blue guy) and Rogue.

CYCLOPS

Leader of the X-Men claims the game, though that's going back a bit – to be accurate he's now leader of one of two current X-Men teams (Storm's boss of the other). The outfit that we see here isn't his current one either (and the nickname quoted – 'Slim' – hasn't appeared in the comics for years!), but at least they've got his abilities right. Cyclops can run, punch and kick, but his main power is to fire force beams from his eyes. (He's actually quite a tragic character in the comics, never able to take off his protective visor in case a stray optic-blast takes out someone he loves, but, needless to say, this doesn't come across in the game.)

Cyke's two levels are a battle through a series of mine shafts – apparently Arcade is mining ruby quartz, the stuff Cyclop's visor is made of, or something – populated by assorted evil robots and men in battlesuits. In many sections the floor is a lethal electrified rail – Cyclops is forced to travel these in the mine cars that come along every so often, giving the whole thing a feel not unlike the chase sequence from the film *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom*.

In a tiny third level you face a giant Sentinel (mutant hating robots built by some nut to rid the world of 'homo superior' – they keep cropping up in the comics on missions to destroy the X-Men). The Sentinel doesn't move but just fires various weapons at our hero.

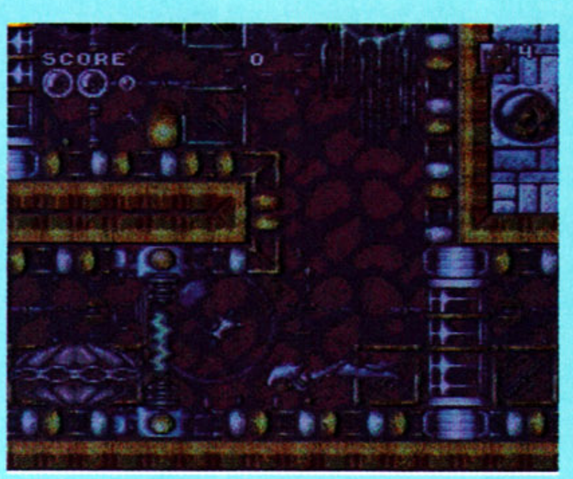
Part of Cyclops' section has him trundle along in this mine car.

STORM

Leader of the other X-Men team, Storm's an ex-African pickpocket (we think) – she can control the weather, lifting herself up on strong winds to enable her to fly (somewhat dubious, that one, and it doesn't appear in the game), as well as fire lightning bolts from her fingertips. One thing she was never particularly noted for in the comics was her swimming ability, so quite what's going on here we haven't got a clue...

In Storm's first level she takes a deep breath, dives underwater and swims around blowing up pressure valves to allow more water in. (She needs the water level to rise so she can get to the exit at the top of the complex – if she could fly, as in the comics, it'd be easier.) This is actually quite fun, with a nasty time limit factor – if Storm doesn't surface to breathe occasionally she'll drown, and often there's no handy air pocket to allow her to do it!

And here's the second bit – more of the same, but packed with more vicious fish and other underwater bad guys. And that's about all these is to say.



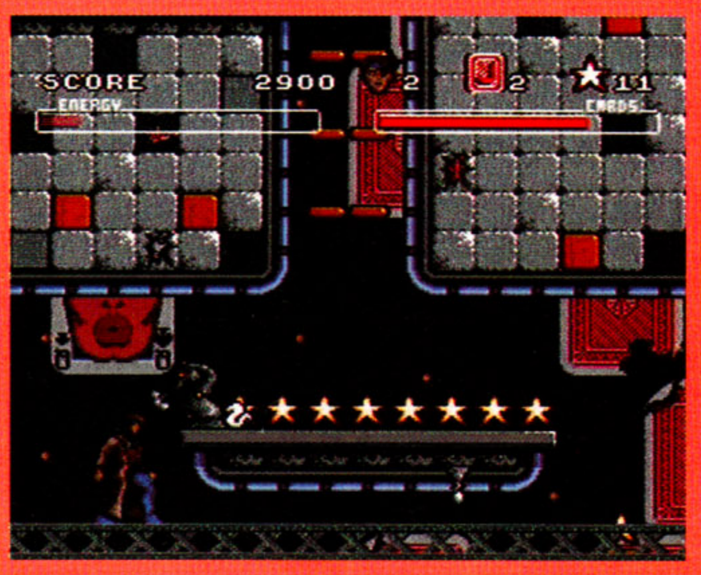
Though you can hardly see her, Storm's at the bottom of this pic.

GAMBIT

A very recent addition to the X-Men, Gambit is a cajun character (French-speaking American woodsmen from the deep south) whose power revolves around charging up various items with 'kinetic energy' and then throwing them around so they explode. He generally uses playing cards (handy to carry around), though anything will do, wears a trenchcoat over his superhero outfit indicating how mysterious he is, and seems to be being built into a bit of a dark horse Wolverine-style character.

All this race-against-time stuff's getting pretty popular – in Gambit's first level he has to avoid a giant metal ball (straight out of *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*), then jump across platforms fighting deadly chess pieces. (Chess pieces?)

In the second section the screen force-scrolls upwards, and Gambit has to charge up his explosive cards to blow himself a route through the various chambers – always aware, however, that getting himself trapped under any of the ledges will kill him when the bottom of the screen eventually catches up. This is a fairly tense and effective level, all in all.



Gambit faces a rogue chess piece as the screen scrolls on.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Oh dear. I so much wanted to like this game (being a bit of a comic fan myself from way back), but nope, try as I might it's almost impossible. *Spiderman & The X-Men* commits three cardinal sins – it looks crap (very much like a Sega Master System game, as many people have commented), makes very poor use of promising material (for some reason superhero games never seem to work), and, worst of all, proves boring to play.

Let's take these in turn, shall we? First off, the look of it. Well, the animation of our heroes is passable, for the most part, but flat colours and unimaginative backdrops render that more or less academic. There's no sense of depth (at all) to any of it, much of it is fairly dark and dull, and even the brightest, most interesting looking levels (like Wolverine's fight with the giant toys) hardly live up to expectation.

Then there's the waste of material. Sure, Spiderman gets to swing around the place in his individual style, but the other characters are very interchangeable. They don't do anything very distinctive, quite simply – that needn't be Cyclops there, any sprite with a gun could complete the level just as well. To my mind a real superhero game should make proper use of the character's abilities – it should give the player the sense that he actually is Wolverine (or whoever). With all the most interesting of our heroes' powers glossed over, *Spidey* fails here, that's for sure.

And finally, there's the fact that it's boring. There ain't much more to say about this really – it just plods along. Yes, it's fairly hard, so you'll get a decent amount of play out of it, but the levels are either very simplistic or very repetitive. Things pick up a bit in later stages, it's true – Gambit's fight not to get crushed against the ceiling as his second level scrolls inexorably upwards is quite fun – but not enough.

And that's more or less it. Less demanding gameplayers – and dedicated comics fans – will get to like it, sure, but for most people this is a step backwards. This has got simple gameplay, lousy graphics, little real feel for the characters, and, on top of all that, you can't help getting that unmistakable feeling that this is just a production-line job, one that nobody ever cared very much about. For shame.

● Matt Bielby

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
64%	85%	70%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	72%
76%		

VERDICT: Occasionally lively but, more commonly, plodding multi-level superhero thriller. Really lousy graphics, though nifty music – one for Spidey/X-Men fans, but very average to the rest of us.

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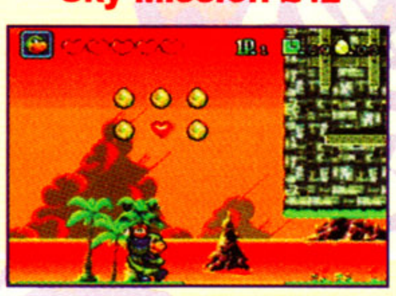
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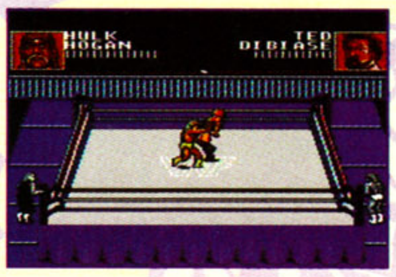

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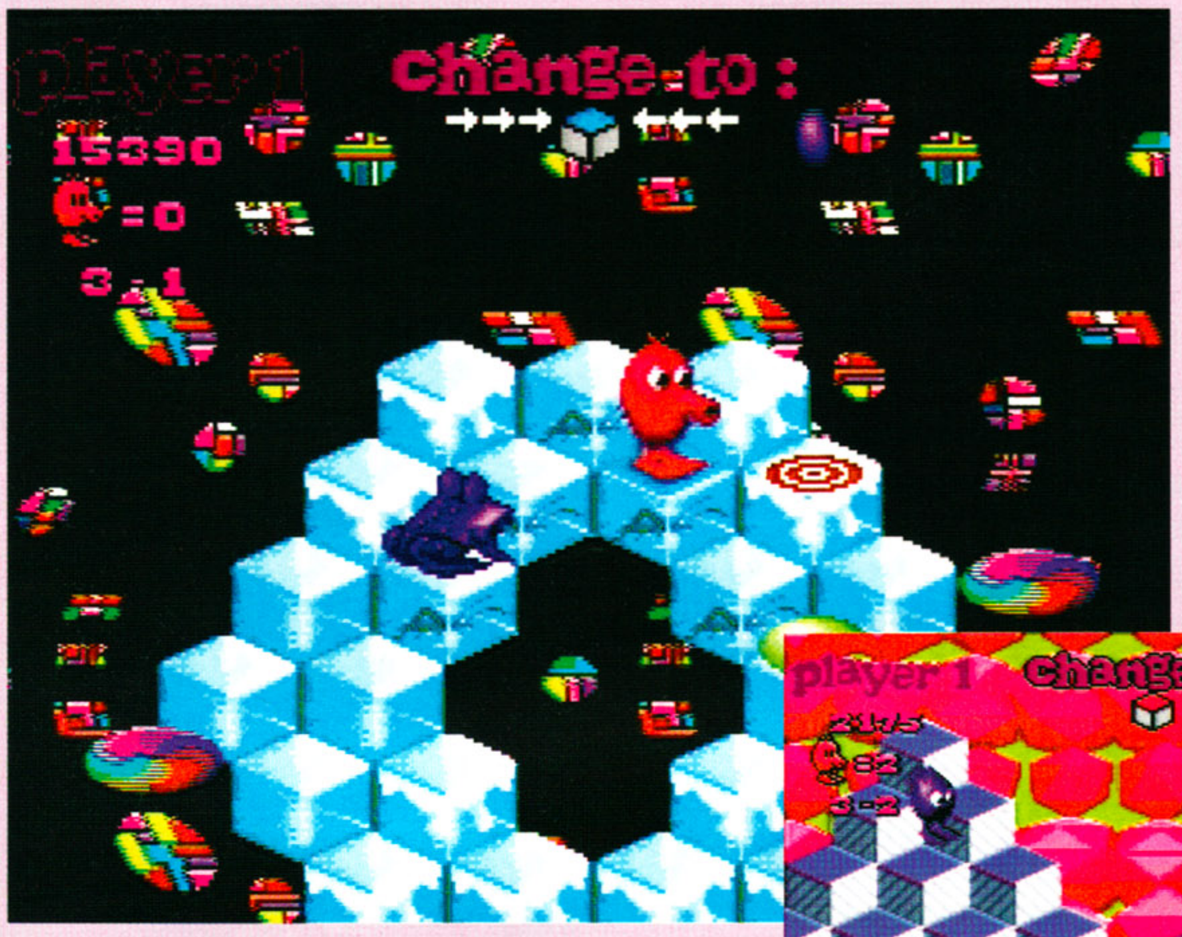
Q*BERT 3

There's a new kid on the block(s). Okay, there isn't – *Q*Bert* is one of the crumbliest characters in the biz – but his third outing adds a few new twists.

US Release

Game: Q*Bert 3
Publisher: NTVIC
Developer: VAPF Game
Price: Approx. £40
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



Brrr! It looks like Bert's got cold feet. Luckily the first screen of level three (where he's only got to jump on each block once) is a whole lot easier than most of the ones in level two (where most of them need to be jumped on twice). Phew, eh?

Coloured discs can be used for floating from one group of blocks to another...

Bert's, er, doing it by the book, here. Watch out for the blob-firing periscope!

...or escaping from the clutches of that no-good snake. (Time it right and he'll plunge to his death.)

HOW TO DO IT

That legendary *Q*Bert* pyramid in (almost) full.

In case you've been locked in a wardrobe for the last 10 years (the original *Q*Bert* coin-op appeared in 1983), here's how it works:

You control an orange blob with a long nose and no arms. He's got to hop around lots of blocks, painting each a new colour. Initially you've only got to jump on each one once. Later on you have to do each one twice. And *much* later on you may well have to jump on each one *exactly* once – no more and no less.

There's a variety of baddies. Some hop around at random, while others home in on you. Needless to say, some of them change the colours of blocks you've already jumped onto.

Here's Bert, dicing with dea... (*Watch it! – Ed.*) Er, okay, here's a screen from level two.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

One of the things I've learnt while playing Super NES games is that if a game's got really neat backgrounds, the chances are it hasn't got a great deal of 'foreground'. *Cameltry* had some great backgrounds with fish swimming about, but the game itself was thin to say the least. *Super Pang* – that had some brilliant backgrounds, but playing it revealed quite a different state of affairs. And *Cosmo Gang*, which I've just reviewed, has some terrific backgrounds, which get better the further you get into the game, but they're simply there as a disguise for the *Space Invaders* gameplay.

The backgrounds in *Q*Bert 3* are brilliant. They do all sorts of weird and hypnotic things with colour cycling and Mode 7. And the 'Game Over' screen is absolutely amazing. I sat and stared at it for hours, completely transfixed.

Actually, that's not strictly true. I sat and stared at it for hours because I wasn't looking forward to writing this review. You see, *Q*Bert* is one of those unfortunate games that – yes – has got brilliant backgrounds, but not much in the way of actual stuff to play.

Don't get me wrong. *Q*Bert 3* works absolutely 100% as it's supposed to, and is quite good fun for a while. It's also packed with really nice graphical ideas – aside from the backgrounds. I loved all the different things you've got to hop over, like teeth, and books, and suitcases – choosing the best ones for this review was pretty hard. But it quickly becomes apparent that *Q*Bert* is no more than mildly amusing, however many levels you play through.

Sure, *Q*Bert* was a neat enough idea back in 1983. But, in 1983, jumping around pyramids was about all an arcade machine could handle. The Super Nintendo is capable of so much more, and that's what we've come to expect of it.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70%	45%	58%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
71%		67%

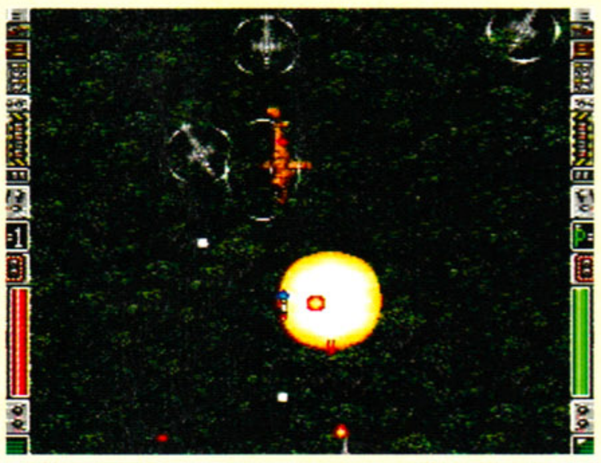
VERDICT: Gently amusing and nice to look at, but not for anyone other than the most casual player.

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles, (081) 340 8565, for lending us the cart.

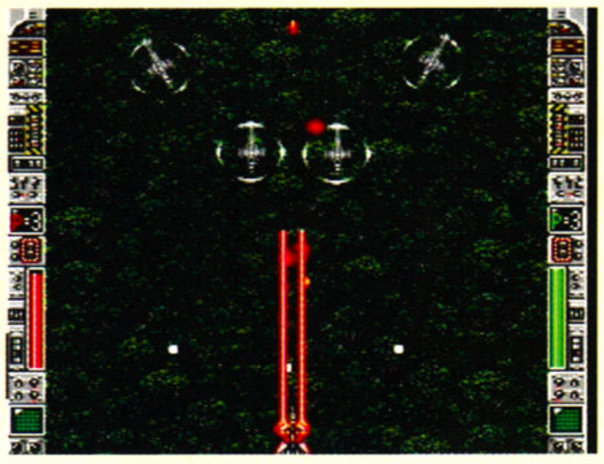
SUPER STRIKE GUNNER

UK Release

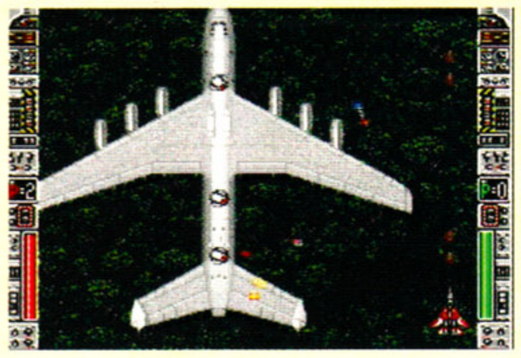
Game: Super Strike Gunner
Publisher: Activision
Price: Approx. £45
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



A basic, no-nonsense, scrolling shoot-'em-up, that's *Super Strike Gunner*. It's rather like a *Twin Cobra*, but without the fun ...or challenge.



The cleverest feature the game has to offer is that both fighters can join together in two-player mode, allowing for nifty multi-directional shooting.



(*Hiding in that corner won't get this review written, Jonathan! – Ed.*)

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Super Strike Gunner, along with *Spindizzy Worlds* (which we reviewed last month), is an 'exclusive to Woolworths' game. We're not quite sure what the advantage of this is, either from Activision's point of view or Woolworths' (or yours for that matter), but that's just the way things are.

The game's a vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up with only a couple of things to distinguish it from the crowd: two players can play simultaneously, and you've got a range of special weapons to choose from at the start of each level. Other than that, we've seen it all before hundreds of times.

Despite the dull graphics (the pics we've printed are about as good as it gets), the overwhelmingly bland backgrounds (mainly of the same-tree-going-past-over-and-over-again variety) and the far-too-easy gameplay, I actually quite enjoyed *Super Strike Gunner*. Maybe it's because it *is* so easy – I'm not very good at shoot-'em-ups. And the two-player link-up is quite a novelty.

So is it worth picking up a copy when you next pop in for a bag of pick 'n' mix? Maybe.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
58%	50%	69%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	65%
64%		

VERDICT: Extremely dull and run-of-the-mill, but still quite enjoyable in its own little way.

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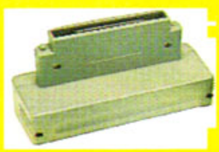
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JAMES BOND JR

US Release

Game: James Bond Jr
Publisher: THQ
Developer: Gray Matter
Price: Approx £40
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

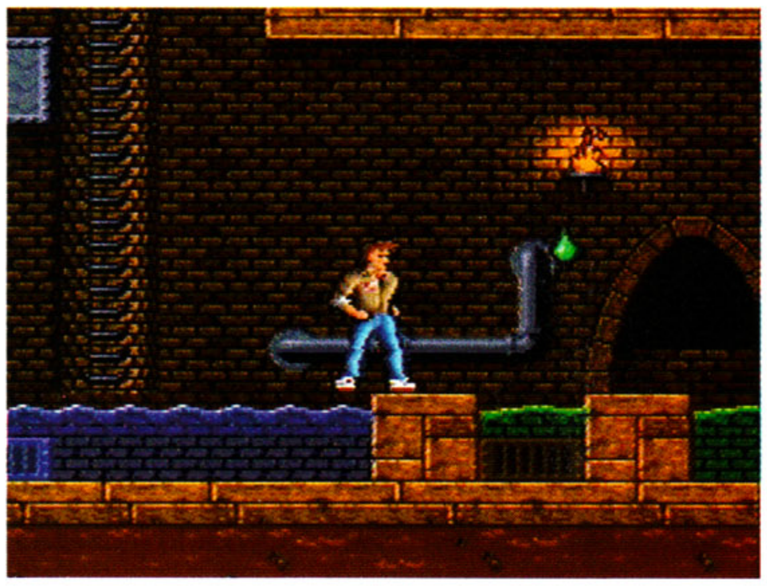
What do *Home Alone*, *Pit Fighter* and *Race Drivin'* have in common? Yes, they're all rubbish. But also, they're all by the same American outfit, THQ. Not an encouraging start for *James Bond Jr*...

I can't decide if it's Dunc, Bixey or Brains this guy reminds me of, but it's one of the Weetabix boys for sure. Anyway, whoever he is, he's crap. (This is a platform section, by the way.)

This game is very disjointed – after a brief platform section, it's straight into a scrolling shoot-'em-up (looking very Amiga, circa 1987), without the slightest hint of an explanation.

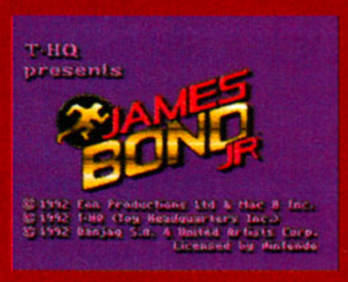
In fact, the only moderately attractive section of the game is this other parallax scrolling blaster. Unfortunately, it's also boring to play – we've seen its type, though much better done, so many times before.

Young Jimmy Bond, puzzled by the rather odd sculpture carved into the wall behind him. 'What a crap statue' he's probably thinking, and who could blame him?



Actually, nearly all of the game is made up of these platform antics. Now, while I've not seen the US cartoon TV show the game's based on, I *have* seen my fair share of 007 films – and this is nothing like them.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?



Patriotism may be the last refuge of the scoundrel, but – call me old fashioned – James Bond always made me feel proud to be British. It was with horror, then, that I heard about the US cartoon based on the antics of his supposed son – who acts just like your average *Beverly Hills 90210* hero, and has absolutely nothing in common with 007. Worse, I learned that the SNES game was to be done by developers THQ who are rapidly gaining the worst reputation in the industry. There's no nice way to say this – everything they've released so far is rubbish, and does the Super NES no favours at all.

So what's this game actually like? Could it surprise us, and turn out to be rather good? Well, no. It's lousy. It's also predictably predictable, boiling down to a imagination-free combination of platform game and shoot-'em-up action. Worse, it's badly disjointed – why the programmers thought that following up the tiny first section (Jimmy running along a stone corridor) with an awful and unrelated helicopter shoot-'em-up was a good idea is a mystery. The platform sections that follow are equally feeble.

To be fair, this *isn't* the worst action game I've played on the SNES – that honour remains with *Pitfighter*, another THQ 'classic'. However, it's a depressing reminder that SNES games can be just as bad as those on any other system.

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
32%	28%	28%

GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:
30%	29%

VERDICT: Quick, turn the page! You really shouldn't look at this. It's ghastly American trash of the first order, with no redeeming features whatsoever. Burn it.

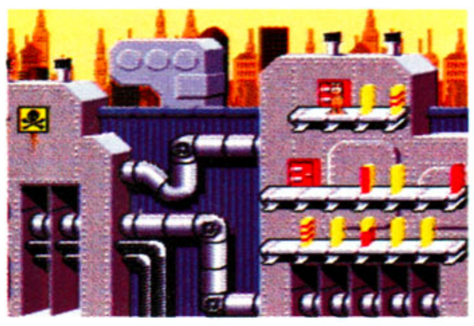
PUSHOVER

UK Release

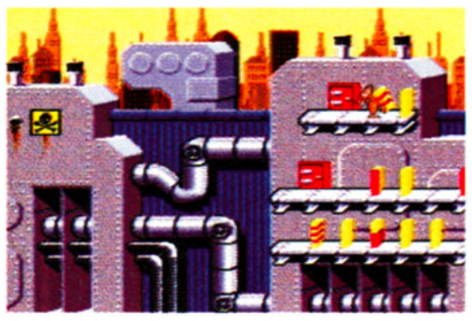
Game: Pushover
Publisher: Ocean
Developer: Red Rat
Price: £45
Release: January
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

Record Breakers was always best when they had attempts on the world domino-tumbling record, something Ocean have recognised in _Pushover_. The object of the game? Rearrange the dominos on each level so that when you push one they all go, the Trigger falling over last.

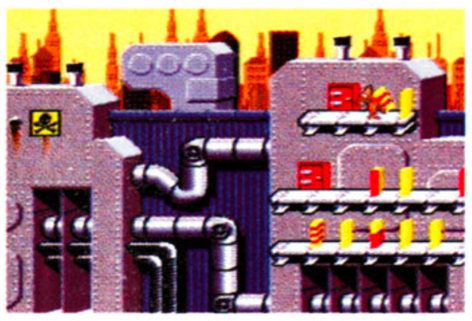
A REAL PUSHOVER



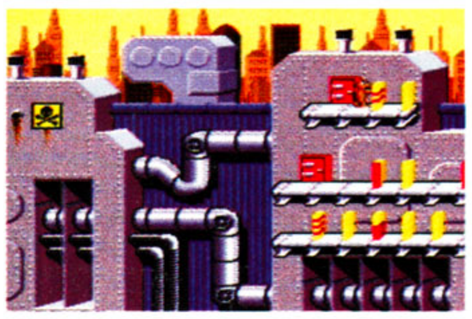
Here's the relatively-easy level nine, and how to do it.



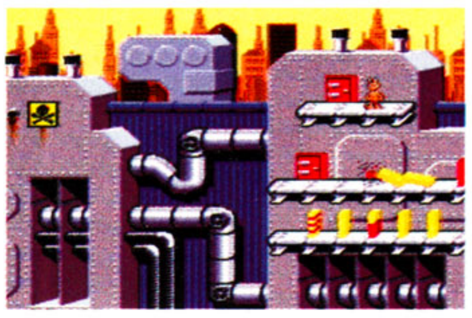
Just swap over the Vanisher and the Standard domino at the top...



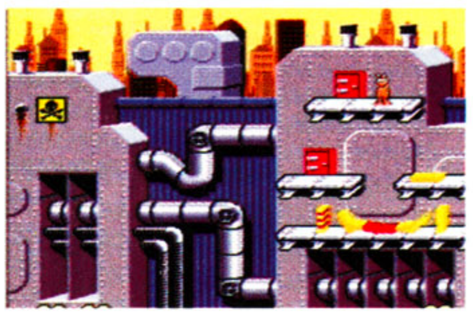
...and give them a shove.



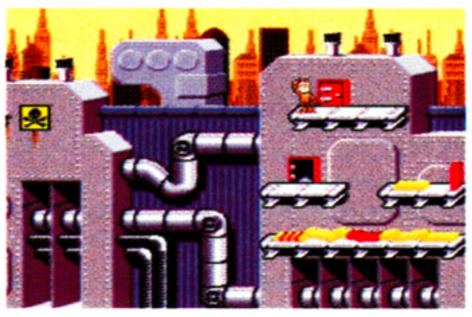
The Vanisher vanishes, the Standard topples off the edge...



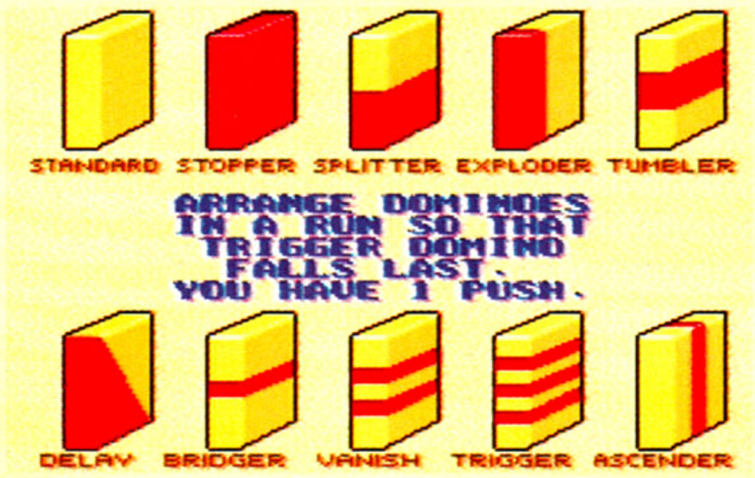
...and bounces off the Blocker, the Exploder explodes...



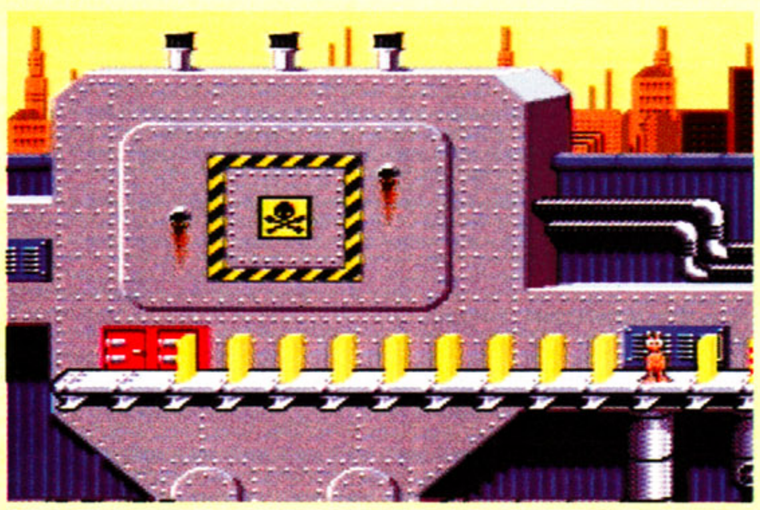
...the Splitter gets hit from above and splits..



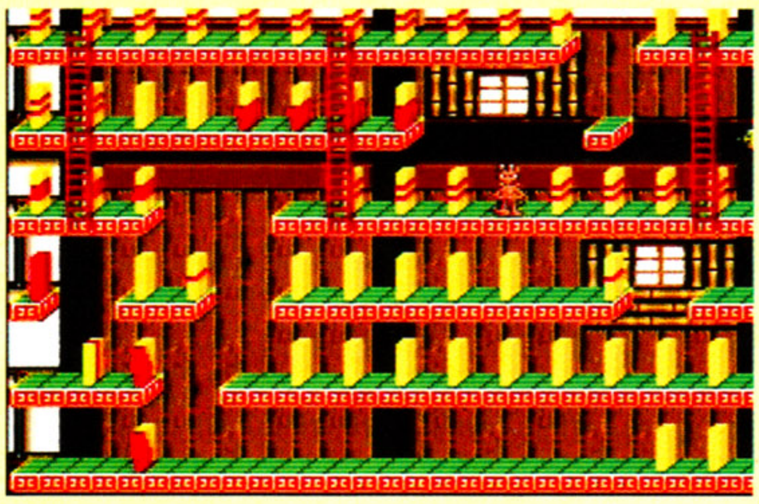
...and the Trigger triggers the door, which opens. Hurrah!



This is the screen you're shown when you press pause. It shows you what all the different dominos look like. Their names should give you a good idea of what they all do (which saves us explaining it all – phew).



Here's the first level. If you can't work this one out, you deserve to be pelted with dominos till you cry.



And – eeeeeeek! – here's a sneak preview of level 99, the penultimate level. We're still working on this one.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

There are two sorts of puzzle games, I've just worked out. There are 'real-time' ones like *Tetris*, where you've got to think on your feet. No really deep thought is required, just a constant stream of shallow but accurate thinking. (*What* are *you talking about? – Ed.*) Then there are ones like *Pushover*. These present you with the same series of problems each time you play (whereas *Tetris* blocks appear randomly), but they're much tougher problems and some might take you hours to solve. Er... so there we are.

Although the guts of *Pushover* are very simple, everything possible has been done to make the game worthy of the title, um, 'a Super NES game'. Your character, G.I.Ant (cringe), is really cute, and well animated. The backgrounds are all really well done, too. And soundwise the game is a gem, with lots of neat spot effects and some fab tunes. As for the puzzles, they've been lovingly designed and the difficulty increases at a sensible rate.

There are only really two problems with the thing. First, as I said before, it's 100% pure puzzling. No arcade skills are required at all, other than making G.I.Ant walk around the platforms. That means it's possible you'll find it really boring – though most people will love it. And second, while in theory you could solve all the screens through sheer brain power, quite a bit of trial and error tends to become involved, which can be frustrating. And third (oops), there are only 100 levels. That might sound like lots, but once you've cracked them all (which *will* take you ages), the cartridge becomes redundant – you'll never want to play *Pushover* again.

A neat, enormously entertaining game, then, but one with a distinctly finite life.

● Jonathan Davies

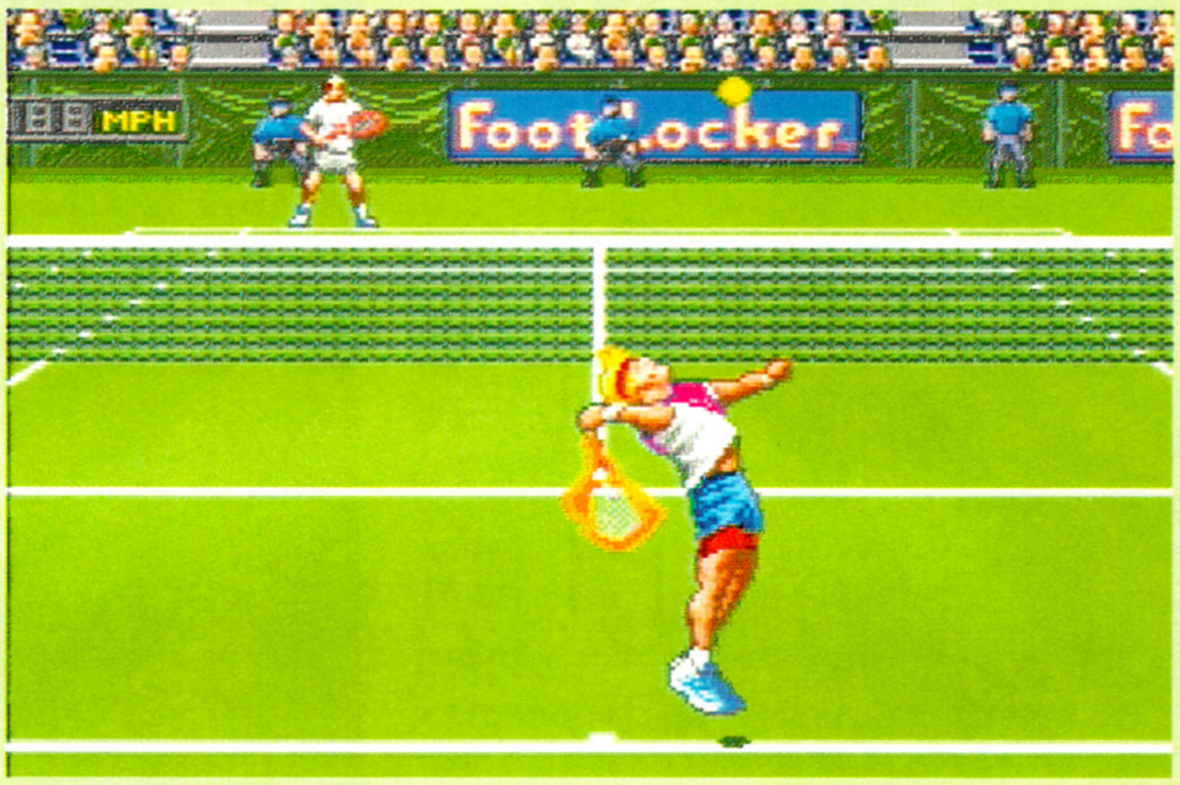
GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	80%	85%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	78%
70%		

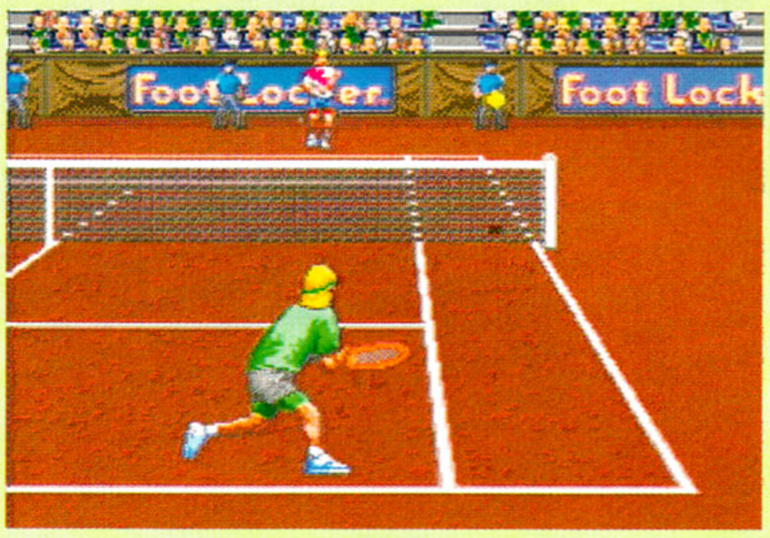
VERDICT: Very well designed and coded, and very absorbing, too. The snag is that once you've solved all the puzzles, that's it. (This'll take ages, though.)

AMAZING TENNIS

The first serious *Super Tennis* competitor goes the full five sets against the current top seed. It's a good game, but will it win the match?

Rather than take the cutsy approach as in *Super Tennis*, David Crane's game tries to be more realistic, adopting a behind-the-player viewpoint instead. While this works well when you're controlling the foreground character, it can prove to be a handicap when you're in the background. What can't be demonstrated here is the wonderful 3D scaling court – the most realistic effect yet for this type of game.





Stefan, or whoever it is you're playing, sneaks a deep cross court shot that gets you running.

Will it be a great top-spin return, or one of those awful moments when the ball bounces off the racket edge?

Below: What can you say about an option screen? *(Well, you could say that there's lots of choices, such as whether you're left or right-handed, which kind of court to play on... Oh yeah, and there's a selection of opponents in one-player mode, and a tournament mode, too – Ed.)*

'Ha, that'll make him sweat.' Sometimes the character on the far side doesn't run quite fast enough...

US Release

Game: David Crane's Amazing Tennis
Publisher: Absolute Entertainment
Developer: In-house
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit + BB

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

David Crane, eh? Remember him? That unseeded player who got through to the quarter finals of Wimbledon in 1976, but then got knocked out, never to be heard of again. (*You sure about this? – Ed.*) Okay, so he's the programmer of *Amazing Tennis*, and may *never* have played tennis at all.

What's the game like? Well, anyone with experience of *Super Tennis* on the SNES will know what fab fun computerised tennis can be. Much of this is down to versatility of gameplay – in a good tennis game there's an almost infinite number of ways to take or return a shot. For much of the time *Amazing Tennis* is strong at this, but occasionally misses the mark quite widely on a number of points.

So what's wrong? Certainly not the graphics – the game is good looking and fluid in play. The animation is also great – the players move well, hit the ball with flair, and run beautifully when chasing a ball. And to cap it all, the 3D ball movement is very accurate. Though it could do with more colour, this is a great looking game. Sound effects are tremendous too, boasting some of the best sampled ball-bounces ever, and the action replays are a treat.

The downside, however, is not only obvious, it could have easily been fixed. Because the action is viewed from behind the player, seeing where you've got to serve the ball to is tricky. What's even harder, though, is being the player who's at the far end of the court. Serving and receiving from that end is far too tricky – you can't see a damn thing.

Despite these shortcomings, this is still an enjoyable game – it's just that a better one is already available on official release.

● Jason Brookes

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
86%	85%	82%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
78%		80%

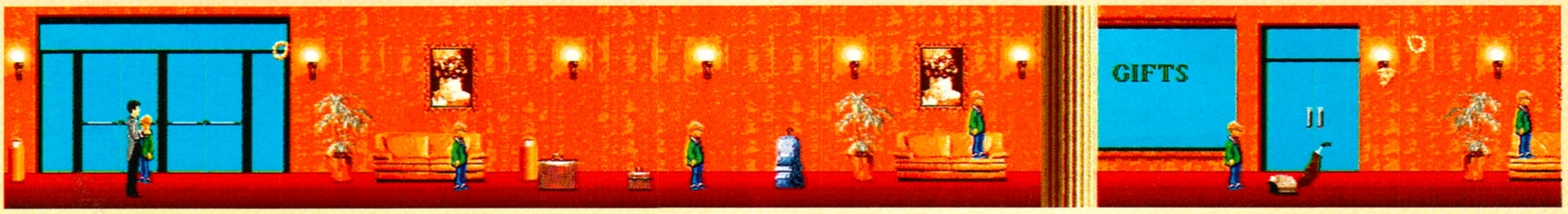
VERDICT: Extremely polished and enjoyable tennis game, featuring an unrivalled 3D effect, though suffering from a restrictive viewpoint and simplistic gameplay. *Super Tennis* is still the champ.

HOME ALONE 2

If, like us, you found yourself cheering on the bad guys during *Home Alone*, you probably weren't first in line to buy the original game (reviewed on page 49). Is the sequel any more tempting? Somehow the answer seems inevitable...

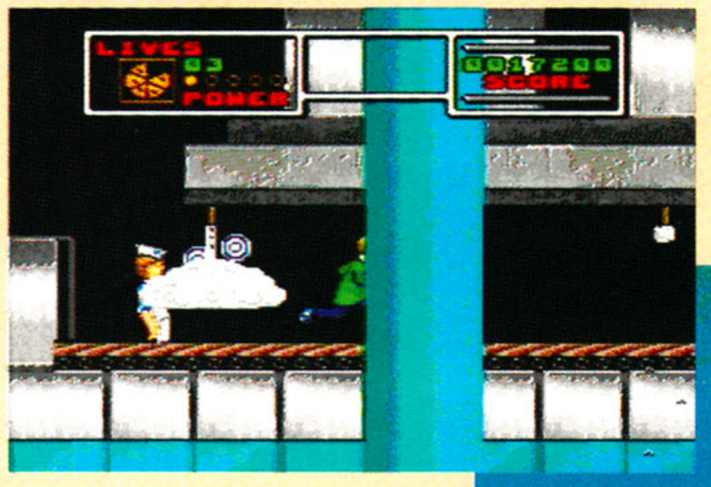
US Release

Game: Home Alone 2
Publisher: THQ
Developer: Imagineering Inc.
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 8 Mbit



Here we've joined up lots of pictures to create a panoramic view of the hotel foyer. (Or a part of it, anyway.) Impressive, huh? You can go into the shops if you want, pick up bits of pizza, find weapons and collect bonus points. But watch out for killer suitcases and the hotel staff!

Make it through the foyer and you're at liberty to wander round the hotel. There's not much point, though – there's little of any use to find in most of it – and you might as well head straight for the basement...



In the bowels of the hotel you have to face the hostile kitchen staff...

...not to mention come up against this less-than-friendly chief security guard.

Not exactly pillow talk, more a pillow fight. At one point Mac comes across this odd bedroom scene...

Make it onto the balcony above the foyer and you'll find this supergun. (A refugee from Desert Strike, perhaps?)

Most of the hotel side of things seems to revolve around these lifts. You can safely ignore everything else.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

The film *Home Alone 2* hasn't been released yet, and I've absolutely no intention of going to see it when it has been. Playing the game has done nothing to change my mind.

While in the original *Home Alone*, MacCauley was indeed at home and (more or less) alone, this time he's not at home, and certainly not alone. He's lost in New York – the film is actually called *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York* – and he's being pursued by hundreds of baddies ('everything from Central Park muggers to sewer rats' – though some mightn't consider that to be much of a range). There are four levels – a hotel, the park, a house and the street – and the object is simply to get through each one, while collecting things and dodging baddies. This is a little more imaginative than the first game, where you simply collected things and stuck them down a chute, but it's hardly likely to win any awards for innovation.

That wouldn't matter if it played okay, but it doesn't. It's very easy, for a start, and a really committed player could probably finish it in around half an hour. Any difficulty there is tends to come from control problems.

Incredibly, I think I actually preferred the original game.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
62%	49%	47%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	32%
26%		

VERDICT: Really dull, really unimaginative and extremely poor value for money. Buy this and you'll be 'Home Alone 2' – your family won't come near you.

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles, (081) 340 8565, for lending us the cartridge.

RACE DRIVIN'

US Release

Game: Race Drivin'
Publisher: THQ
Developer: In house
Price: Approx. £45
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

Race Drivin' is a conversion of the blindingly-fast, 3D filled-polygon driving game coin-op. But surely the Super Nintendo can't do blindingly fast, 3D filled polygons? Erm... ah.

Remember those loop-the-loop things you used to send your Matchbox cars round? Well, now you know how they felt. Just hold accelerate and... breakfast revisited!

Don't lorry! Er... (*You're fired – Ed.*) The trick here is to make like James Bond, tip the car onto two wheels and drive along the wall of the tunnel. Woooo-arrrgh!

Don't go over humpback bridges – if that's what they are – too fast, or this tends to happen (ie you crash).

You'd have to be stark raving bonkers to choose a manual car – the gear-change controls are *awful*.

Hurrah! We're home in time for tea.

GOOD, BAD OR UGLY?

Race Drivin' in the arcades is great – just like owning a real car. (A Montego, for example.) But one doesn't play it too often, partly because it's so expensive. So, wouldn't a SNES conversion be a good idea?

I found that most people who played the game here in the office went through three stages:
1) The 'Crap Graphics' stage. It's becoming increasingly apparent that the SNES is never going to be great at this '3D polygon' business. (Not, at least, until the new Argonaut-developed chip arrives.) *Race Drivin'*s graphics take the SNES to new extremes of awfulness, though. The frame update is devastatingly slow, and gets even slower when something complicated happens. You won't appreciate this from our pics, but you *will* see how crude it looks. In fact there's one bit – a sort of corkscrew – that just consists of loads of jumbled up grey polygons flashing across the screen. Luckily, hold down 'left' and 'accelerate' and you'll get through okay.
2) The 'Hmm, Maybe It's Not All That Bad' stage. Once you've got used to the graphics, which you do eventually, you'll find that the actual driving business works okay. Not as well as the coin-op, but it's still pretty good fun.
3) The 'Tch, What a Load of Old Cobblers' stage. This follows about 20 minutes later, when you've been round the three courses a few times and got thoroughly bored with them.

● Jonathan Davies

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
25%	31%	52%

GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:
22%	35%

VERDICT: X-cert graphics, all rightish (with stress on the ish) gameplay but zero lasting appeal. The 'moo' when you run over a cow is nice, though.

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ZELDA III: A LINK TO THE PAST

SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

THE COMPLETE SOLUTION

By Nick Burne

Part Two

Remember what happened last month? No? Well, to recap, we set off on our quest, ran around a castle, rescued Princess Zelda, visited a town, met the Elder, went to The East Palace, fought assorted baddies, took on a boss character, collected a pendant, went to the Desert Palace, found the Power Glove, collected two more pendants, fought giant worms, got transformed into a rabbit, entered the Tower Of Hera, grabbed the Moon Pearl, discovered the Master Sword, fought the evil wizard Ganon and got ourselves teleported to the mysterious Dark World. All this, and we're only half way through...

Getting started on The Dark World

1 You appear in The Dark World on top of a strange tower, placed in the same spot as the castle of Hyrule once stood. Suddenly you receive a telepathic message from the Elder, telling you about the wizard's evil plan. After this, go to the eastern part of the map, where Dungeon 1 lies.

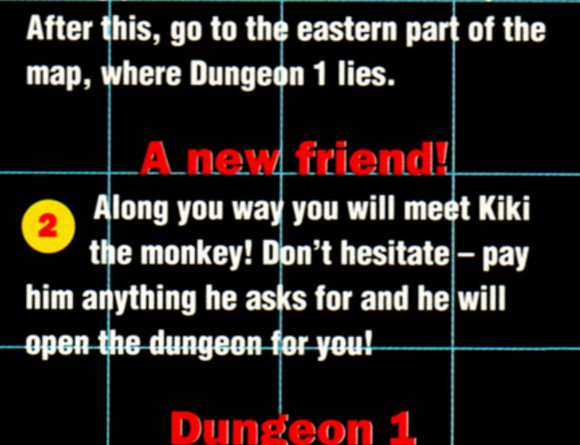
A new friend!

2 Along you way you will meet Kiki the monkey! Don't hesitate – pay him anything he asks for and he will open the dungeon for you!

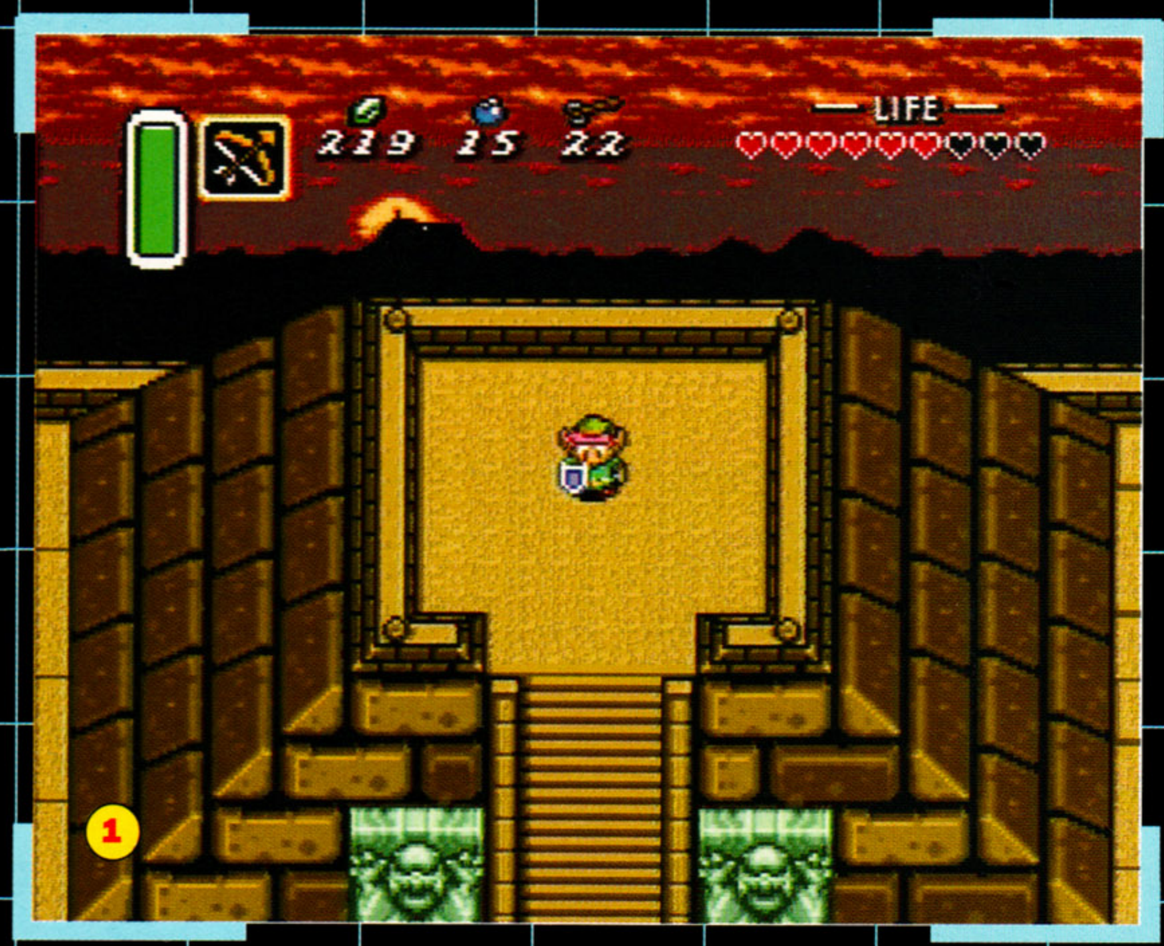
Dungeon 1

When you first enter the dungeon, there are three doors to go through. Pick the left one. After going down the stairs, press the switch to make a chest appear. In the chest is a key – take it.

Now go through the right door, where there is a warp. Keep stepping on warps until you enter a room with a tile on the wall. Press this tile and Zelda tells you that she is being held at Turtle Rock. Step through the warp after pushing a block, and warp back.



This little blue guy is Kiki the monkey – he can easily be bribed into helping you.



Now go through the middle door and through the next as well. Step on the jump plate and run on up the stairs and jump down, onto the middle platform. Knock the assorted creatures you find there off the edge with an arrow, and hit the ball with an arrow too. Run to the right and exit.

You'll find yourself in a room. Get rid of the set of skulls on the right, then push the top right statue onto the switch. Now quickly dash through and leave the room. You now face the reverse monsters! Shoot them with arrows and leave.

3 Run past the spike and hit the ball which will drop the wall, allowing you to pass. Where do you go next? Answers on a postcard to *Super Play* at the usual address. (No, I'm only joking!) What you should really do is shoot the green statue in the eye with an arrow (nasty!). This will reveal a staircase.

Now you'll find that you're stuck, so run back up to the first floor, go to the middle platform, then push the lower block to the left and exit from the lower door. Then bomb the middle of the platform! No, I'm not totally crazy – just get on with it!

Jump down and jump down again, press the button, get the key and warp. Now go all the way back around again! This time don't jump but go through the door. Here lies the Big Key! Grab it, jump to the right and warp back to 1F. Now hit the ball with your arrows and go up back through the locked door. Phew!

Okay, now what you've got to do is run along the path and go right. Head down the right stair and get the key. Now go back up and go left twice. You should now be in a dark room. Head toward the far right of the room and blow up the wall with a bomb. Open the big chest and grab the Magic Hammer (yes, really). You can use this hammer to pound the pink things into the ground, so go all the way back down and whack those pinkies! Shoot the ball with an arrow while standing by the wall. Go left, head all the way round to get to the warp, then push the top right block down. Warp, and get yourself ready to fight the boss!

Facing the Boss of Dungeon 1!

This boss resembles a giant masked lizard thing. You'll need to blow his mask off with bombs and fire arrows at his head. Don't worry, he's not too difficult to kill!

Crystal No.1

After the lizard boss you'll come across a merry little scene. You'll see a crystal – after grabbing it, the crystal increases in size, while a girl appears, thanks you and tells you where some other girls are being held captive. Venture onward to Dungeon 2.

Time for a quick breather

Dungeon 2 lies in the south of the map, and that's where you've got to go next. However, once you reach the Dungeon, do not enter at once. First, warp to the Light World, using the mirror, and release the water by pulling the left hand lever. Step into the mist to warp back and enter Dungeon 2.

Dungeon 2

As you can see, water fills the passageways of this dungeon. I hope you bought the flippers from the top right segment of the map in The Light World – you'll be a bit stuck otherwise. Now climb up the broken ladder and head up. After killing the beasts, a chest will appear with a key in it. Open the door and head down to B1.

Straight away you'll see a secret passage on the left, down which lies a treasure chest which contains a map! Pick up all the pots and under one you'll find a key. Open the door in the bottom left of the room and exit.

In this next bit you'll be faced by a load of baddies. First kill them all, then head down the stairs and up into a room which contains a key. Go back and unlock the door. In this room is a secret passage, which contains a bomb and a rupee. There is also a lever. Push the lever from right to left and water will flood the passageway, enabling you to climb the broken ladder. Now you're in a room with the big chest in the middle. Head through the bottom exit.

Now walk all the way round clockwise, and push the bottom block left. This reveals a compass. Go back into the big chest room and through the bottom left exit. Run through this room and grab the key from the room above. Go back round to the big chest room and go through the top right exit. Hit the ball and push the switch. You can now swim over the unmovable blocks near the key.

After heading left, push the bottom block left and the middle block up. Head up the stairs to 1F. Here, if you fall down the top left hole, you will land next to a treasure chest containing a red rupee. If you fall down the top right hole, it leads to a passageway containing the Big Key! Now go get that chest!

Collect the Hook Shot!

The Hook Shot enables you to grab onto skulls (and various other things), this can be very handy for you to swing across awkward gaps.

Fire across to the right. In one of the skulls is a key which lets you open the door at the top of the room. In this room you want to push the statue onto the switch, then go through the first door on the right. Follow the passage round, then push the lever.

This drains all the water, and allows you to collect two treasure chests from the room below. In the room above, if you go through the stretch of water second from last on the right it leads to a staircase, taking you up a level.

Here you are very near to the end of this dungeon. There is a secret passage at the top of the next room which contain hearts, bombs and magics which will help you with the boss, so collect these. On the right is a key which will open the door to the boss.

Beating the end of Dungeon 2 boss

The boss is easy! Use the Hook Shot to grab his minions, then swipe at them to destroy them. After killing them you'll be able to attack the main body of the boss. When he's dead, grab the crystal and head for Dungeon 3!

Collecting the flute

Before warping back to The Light World, you may want to stop off at the grove near the town. Here a boy will give you a shovel. Warp back to the real world, and dig at the top left of the grove. You should now come across a flute. Play this at the statue in the middle of the town and a bird will appear which will take you anywhere you want!

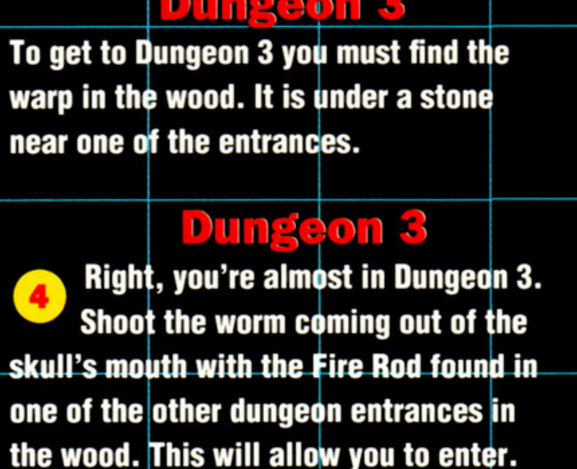
Finding your way to Dungeon 3

To get to Dungeon 3 you must find the warp in the wood. It is under a stone near one of the entrances.

Dungeon 3

4 Right, you're almost in Dungeon 3. Shoot the worm coming out of the skull's mouth with the Fire Rod found in one of the other dungeon entrances in the wood. This will allow you to enter.

When you first go into the dungeon, you will need to go all the way round the passageway so you can collect the key. After getting the key, go through the locked door.



To get to the third dungeon, cross this river using the Hook Shot. Looks like it didn't work this time!

Now make your way slowly round the room being careful not to fall in any pits. To get out of this room you'll need to light all the torches with the Fire Rod, making sure none go out before you leave the room. To get out of the next room you'll need to hack at the vines at the top of the screen. The key you need to escape from this room is being held by the Mummy. Fall down the hole in the next room.

Defeating the Dungeon 3 Boss

To kill off this boss you'll need to use the Fire Rod, and when that runs out, attack it with your sword. I found this boss very hard, so keep on trying!

Dungeon 4

5 Dungeon 4 is located in the town. To enter the dungeon you need to pull the statue's pitchfork in the centre of the town.

Once inside, your best bet is to wander around a bit, collecting everything from the various chests dotted around B1. Then go through the

Find the statue in the centre of town, then pull its pitchfork to continue!

locked door using the BIG KEY. You should now be in a long corridor.

Grab the key from one of the skulls, and unlock the door on the bottom left. Now keep on going to the left until you reach the end of the corridor. Go up, collect a key, and open the locked door. Hit the switch on the bottom left and walk to the right. Place a bomb in front of the bar then pick it up and throw it over the bar so it blows a hole in the ground. (This allows light to shine through!) Now go all the way back down and through the door with the block in front of it, following the passage until you see some stairs. Go down them!

Now defeat all the enemies in the room (easy, eh?) and go left, turn down, then finally go right. Keep going right until you can see what looks like a prison. Simply walk into the locks to open them. BUT BE WARNED! The woman in the cell is not a woman – she's really Blind the Thief, this level's boss character!

Now use the key in the cell to open the locked door which you saw on your way there. In there is the BIG CHEST! This contains the Titan's Mitt (yes, really) which enables you to carry heavy stones. Now go back up a level and enter the boss' room (you do have that compass, don't you?) where the cute, innocent, lovable little girl will mutate into evil villain Blind!

Defeating Blind the Thief

To defeat Blind, you must hit him in the head. He's really not too hard, so you should be able to finish him off pretty quickly! Now you've got to make your way to Dungeon 5.

Dungeon 5

6 Dungeon 5 is located in the bottom right half of the map. However, to enter it you must warp back to The Light World and pick up the dark stone in front of the Pool Of Happiness. Underneath the stone is a warp! Take it back to The Dark World and enter.

To pass the first room you need to

To get past this wall, teleport to the Light World, walk up, then warp back.

set fire to one of the ice monsters hidden on the wall – use the Fire Rod. One of the blue electricity creatures holds the key to the next room.

Press the switch to open the door in the next one after that. Then you'll need to push the middle block to the right to go down. If you defeat all the penguins (use the Hook Shot), a chest will appear containing the compass. Now push the block up to go to the right. Exit the room through the left door, pushing the block left so you can go up. In this room plant a bomb next to the ball, and run around the blocks quickly. Now bomb the centre of the room and drop through.

When the skeletons drop down, hit them with your sword and plant a bomb on the remains. After you have killed two skeletons the door will open. A blue creature holds the key to the next room – don't hit the crystal ball! Now go down the stairs, after passing through the next room, and kill the creatures with the Hook Shot. Make sure you watch out for the massive spiked ball in the next room, though!

Okay, go through the top door and fall through the hole, go through the door on the right, and use the Hook Shot to swing the gap. Go down and then up the stairs, use the Hook Shot to swing across the spikes, then press the

ZELDA III (Continued)

switch and grab the key. Go up the stairs and destroy the skeletons with a bomb. Then hammer the pink things and lift the block up, pulling the idol's tongue to open the door – the switch will reveal a chest. Go right and up the stairs. In that chest is the Big Key!

(Still with us?) Okay, now go all the way back to the spike room and through the door on the left. Keep on going left and down the stairs. Blow up the floor on the left and fall down. Grab the blue armour (great colour scheme!) from the big chest and go right. Now go through the locked door and down the stairs. Walk down and go right. Hit the ball and go back up to the door, which you needed the Big Key to open. Now move right – you'll find the switch to open the door under the top right skull. Go down, then left. Move up the stairs and through the door.

Right, from here you need to go back to the big chest so you can push the block in the next room down the hole. Now drop through yourself and push the block onto the switch. Go through the open door, pull the right statue away from the pink things and hammer them down. Underneath the big block is a hole. Drop down! (Honestly, this does all make sense if you're playing the game!)

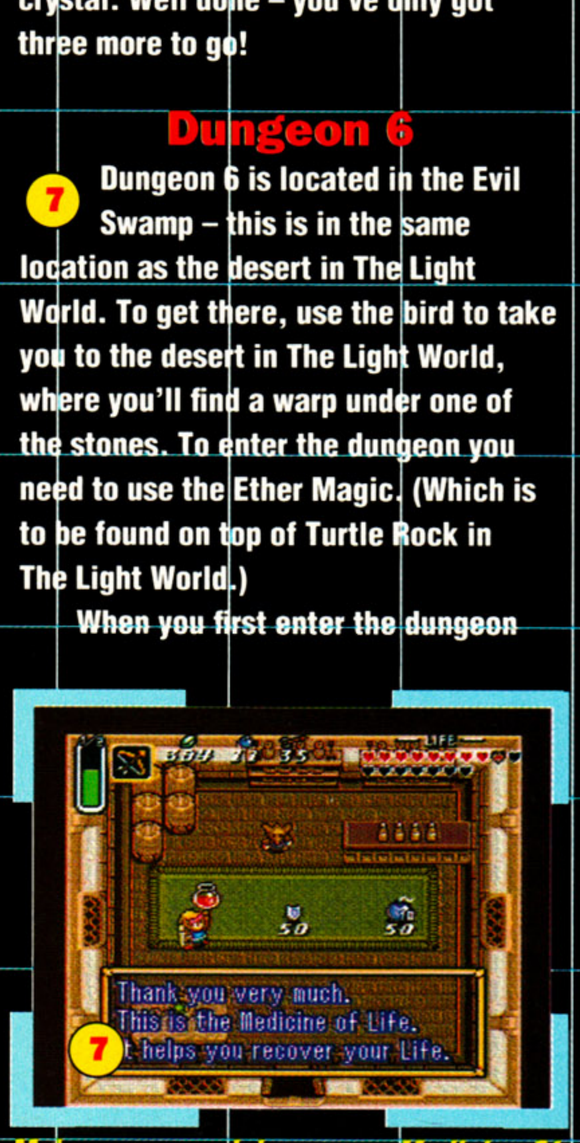
Killing the Dungeon 5 Boss!

To defeat the boss you need to use the Fire Rod (very handy thing, that Fire Rod) to break it's shell. After that, hack at it with your sword! Now grab the crystal. Well done – you've only got three more to go!

Dungeon 6

7 Dungeon 6 is located in the Evil Swamp – this is in the same location as the desert in The Light World. To get there, use the bird to take you to the desert in The Light World, where you'll find a warp under one of the stones. To enter the dungeon you need to use the Ether Magic. (Which is to be found on top of Turtle Rock in The Light World.)

When you first enter the dungeon you'll need to Hook Shot across the hole. Kill the four wizards that appear to pass through the next room. That's all the help I'm going to give you on this level though – I think I've been more than generous with you so far, so let's see how you do trying to get through this dungeon by yourself, shall we? However, just to make sure you don't get *too* stuck, here are some handy hints to see you through...



Make sure you pick up some Medicine Of Life along the way!

- The big chest contains the Cane Of Somaria, a magical item which enables you to create blocks.
- The big key is in a chest located on B1. However, to get it you must fall from the room above.
- To make a certain passageway appear, four torches must first be lit. It's not as easy as that though – they're all in separate rooms!
- Create a block (using the Cane Of Somaria) to turn on the switch in one of the rooms on B2, but be quick about it!
- Always be on the lookout for a secret passageway on B2 – it's vitally important to complete the dungeon.

Getting the better of the Level 6 Boss!

This boss resembles, well, a sort of giant blob with eyes! What you have to do is kill all the little eyes first, and then attack the big one. You only need to finish it off with your sword, so it's not very difficult.!

Dungeon 7

8 So here you are, in the very last stages of the game, about to take on the evil Ganon (the big baddy from the game), and rescue (once again!) Princess Zelda. However, to do that, first you're going to have to get to Turtle Rock! (That's to be found at the top of the map.)

Before you set off, though, this is a good time to make sure you're completely ready for this final stage of the quest. First off, it's wise to buy two blue potions or (if you can't afford them) two green ones. They're essential to your quest. You'll also need the Quake Magic from the top right at the map in The Dark World.

To make the warp to Turtle Rock appear, you need to hit the stumps in this order: right, top and, finally, left. When you arrive at Turtle Rock, use the Quake Magic, and this will open up the Turtle Rock. Finally, make sure you pull the Turtle's left flipper for a good, healthy bonus!

Off to buy some potions to be ready for the final stage of your quest.

Inside Dungeon 7

Here are a few hints to get you through Dungeon 7:

- Cast blocks onto the question marks to make a massive block appear, which you can control!
- To open the door in the top right of 1F, you'll need to light some torches while riding the block!
- After going through that door, two chests, containing a map and a key, lie at the far end of the room.

Use the key to open the locked door in the first big room – you can get the key from the creature you'll find in that room (once you've killed him), of course. To get the key from the next room, stand away from the lowered wall. Now shoot the ball with an arrow, and then push the top block on the left to the right! Take the pipe on the bottom right and exit, take the right exit and then go out again.

Kill the bouncy creature and grab the key. Open the door and go through the pipe to the Big Key, then take the pipes all the way back round to where you started and take the left pipe. Kill the two bouncy creatures, go down and then left. Plant a bomb at the bottom of the room and go out.

Go to the right and enter. Place a block and grab the treasure from the chest. In there is a shield, which you can use to reflect the bolts fired by the eyes! Go up, through the locked door, take the pipe and enter the room. Blow up the passages on the right and top of the room and go through the right one. Pull the left idol's tongue to enter a treasure room. After grabbing the rupees, exit and go up.

Shoot the ball, grab the key, open the locked door, then take the red block around the maze and press the switch. After all that, leave by the door at the bottom. Run through the next two rooms and plant a bomb at the bottom. Exit and re-enter. Now go back and grab that treasure!

Finally, unlock the door with the key you found in one of the chests, make your way round the room and prepare to fight the end of Dungeon 7 double-headed boss.

Killing the end of Dungeon 7 boss

This boss may look hard, but he ain't. Freeze the Fire Head with the Ice Rod and hack at it with your sword. After that do the opposite to the Ice Head. It will now explode and turn into a snake! Destroy it by hitting it in the stomach.

You've finally rescued Zelda!

Yay! You have rescued Zelda for the final time (in this game, anyway), but before you finish the game you have to find and fight Ganon in his tower! This is at the top of the map. When you get there the crystals will break the barrier, and you'll be able to get it.

Since this is the last dungeon in the game, I'm not going to tell you exactly how to complete it, but once again I'll give you a few handy hints.

- Make sure to push all the out-of-place blocks.
- The magic of Ether will reveal magical walkways.
- This tower is huge, so you're not going to complete it all that fast even if you hurry. That being the case, take your time.
- You need to blow a hole in 1F's floor.
- There is another room in which you must light four touches. Start from the top and make your way down.

Taking out Ganon, the end-of-game boss!

When you first meet him, Ganon is in his wizard form – in other words, he looks exactly the same as the other times you've taken him on, the difference being that he's much more powerful than he's been before. After this fight he will fly into the pyramid in the centre of the map.

To fight Ganon again you're going to have to follow him. Before you go to him, however, you'll need to buy a Super Bomb from the Bomb Shop, and use it to blow up a hole in the pyramid. Inside is a pool. Throw your bow and arrows into it to receive the silver arrows! These will help you kill Ganon when you face him for the last time!

Beyond that, though, I'm not going to tell you what to do. (Ha ha ha!) Oh, all right then, one warning! Always try to keep the torches burning – you haven't got a hope of completing the game if you don't.

Anyway, after you defeat Ganon you'll receive the power of the Triforce! And that's about it – you've finally finished the game! Well done. (Now when's *Zelda IV* coming out, eh?)

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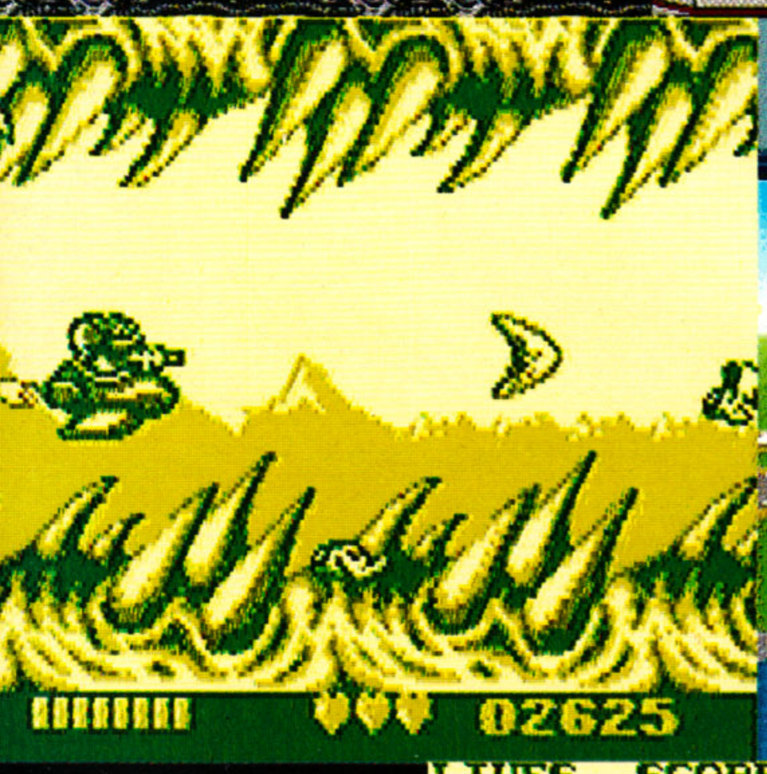

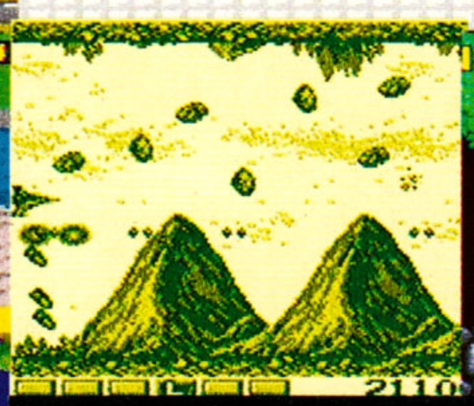

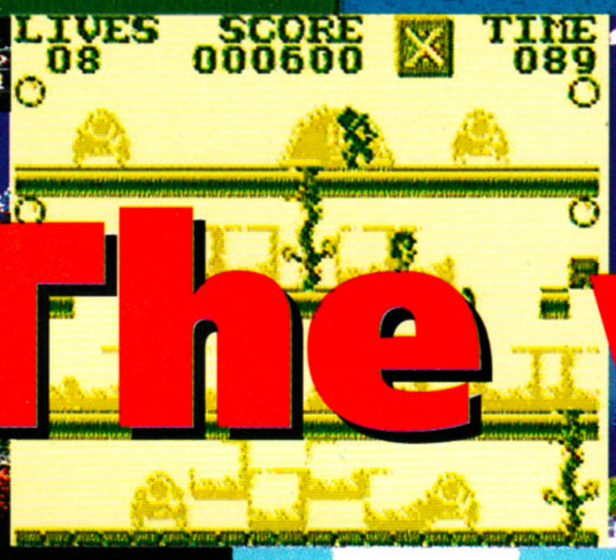

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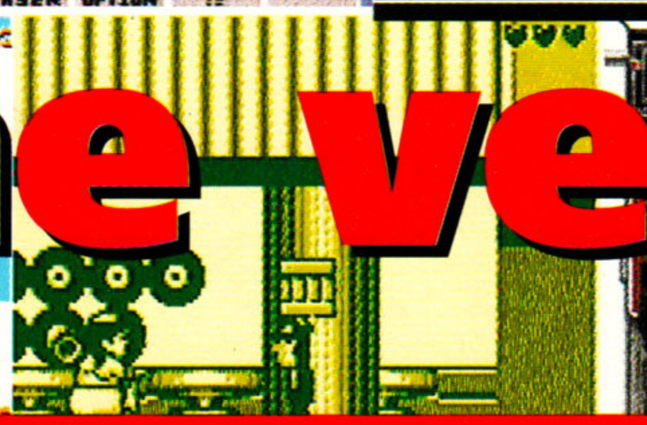

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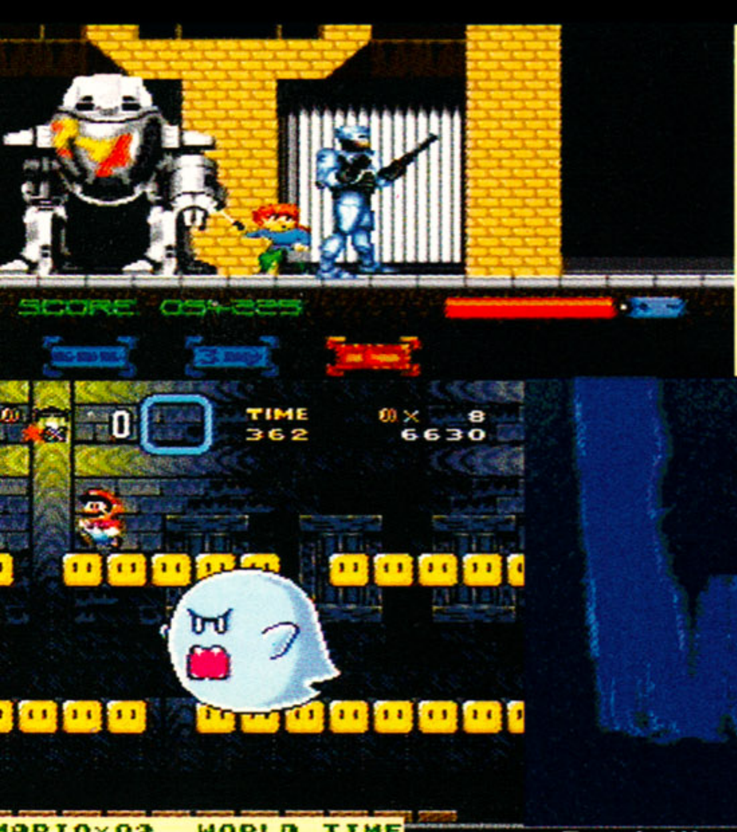

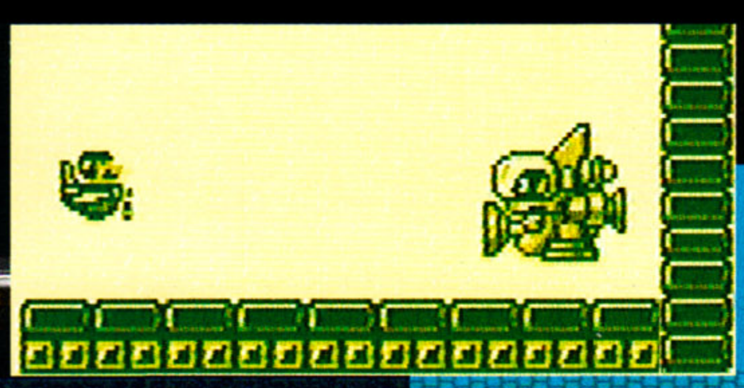

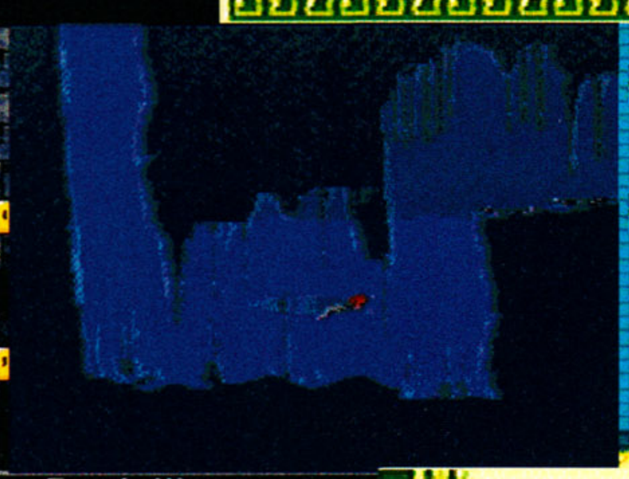

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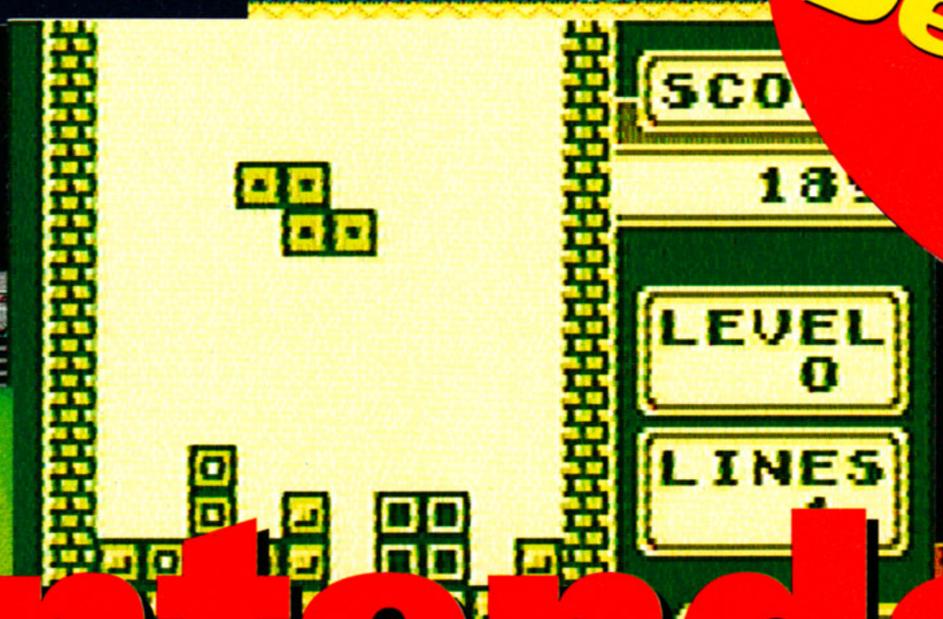

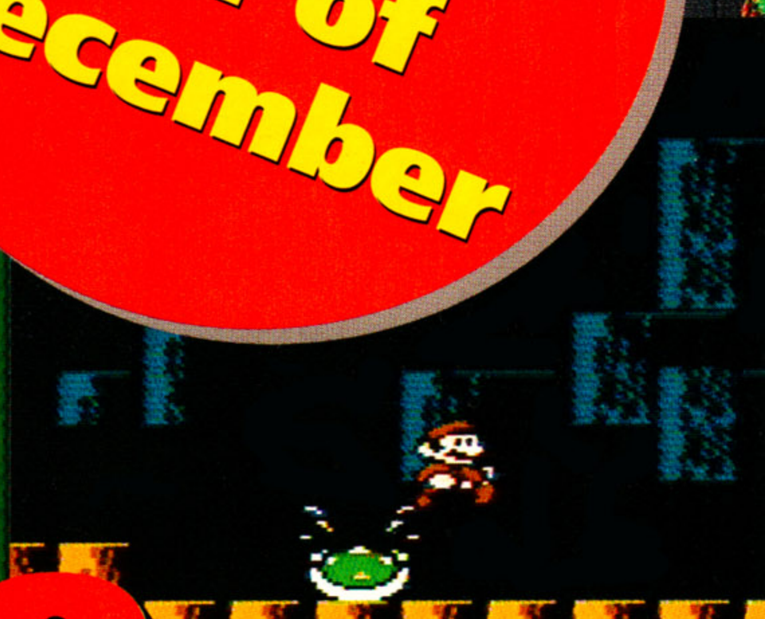

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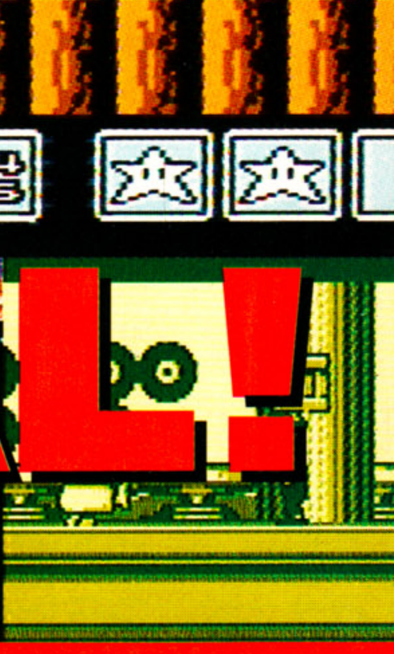

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GAMEFREAK

SNES TECH & GAMING ANSWERS

by Jason Brookes

Rapidly getting more complicated than 'Techy's Anonymous' in *Everyday Electronics*, Gamefreak deals with the questions the man in Dixon's just didn't have answers for. Whether you're caught up in the great PAL and SCART fiasco, or simply want to know more about the SNES scene, Gamefreak's here to help.

Dear *Super Play*,
I'm writing to see if you can solve a problem that concerns my SCART television (21in). I own an imported Super Famicom (SCART), and when I play games on the TV I don't seem to get all of the background appearing (eg the face at the beginning of *Castlevania IV* only half appears.) I also get the borders associated with PAL Super NIntendos, but the speed expected of a SCART machine is retained.

I know that the fault does not lie with the Famicom, as on my friend's television (SCART) the borders disappear and the backdrops are clear. What causes my TV to do this, and what can be done to remedy it?
David Watts (15), Romford, Essex.

Terry Snape from Macclesfield is having the same screen size problem, and while this isn't a common occurrance, it *is* true that some older TVs with SCART sockets only allow a narrow bordered PAL-type picture when used with a 60Hz imported SCART console. The display may not be full-screen, but the picture and sound *will* run at full speed – still better than on the UK machine. As for the backdrops on some of David's games disappearing – sounds strange to me (especially as I can't think of a face appearing at the beginning of *Castlevania IV*!). If anybody is experiencing a similar problem, let me know and I'll look into it.

Dear *Super Play*,
Before I start I have to say your magazine is excellent, real quality stuff and makes excellent reading. I especially enjoyed the Anime special and the story behind the launch of the SNES – well done everyone. I would be grateful if you could answer a few questions though:
1) Why do nearly all my games slow down? *R-Type* is the worst example but *Goeman Warrior* suffers, as does *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*, and *Area 88* is pretty bad, too. Even *Contra* has problems at times. I might be sounding a little bit negative, but the whole thing is starting to get to me. Flicker is also a problem as *Smash TV* illustrates. Can the SNES have all 128 sprites on sceen at once without slow-down or flicker? I doubt it.
2) What is sprite flicker?
3) When will Irem learn to program the SNES properly? Look at *R-Type*!
4) Will you include a problem page?
Andrew Laggan, Cramlington, Northumberland.

1) That old chestnut eh? A combination of slow processing power and sloppy programming are the reasons behind slow-down. A really fast and busy shoot-'em-up without slow-down or flicker isn't impossible – look at *Super Aleste* for proof of that – but I can't envisage a day when all games will be this polished, especially with new programmers on the machine all the time.

The solution to this particular problem seems to lie with special cartridge co-processors or digital signal processors (DSP's) that boost the sprite-handling capabilities of the SNES. As well as the Argonaut-developed Super FX chip, manufacturers like Seta have developed chips to improve their games – just as Nintendo did for the NES with its MMC chips in games like *Super Mario 3*. This is the direction in which things are heading.
2) Sprite flicker results when too many sprites appear on the same horizontal scan line on the screen. The Super NES can only handle 256 pixels of sprite data on one line before the graphics processor gets overloaded and switches off certain sprites. Unfortunately, a design flaw in the Super NES turns off the most significant sprites instead of the ones last added to the screen. Nintendo included a correction facility in the Super NES, but things aren't as user friendly as they could be. Again, DSP's could be the answer.
3) When these new chips solve all their problems, probably!
4) Yep, you're in it.

Dear Gamefreak,
I thought your complete guide to the Super NES was great but I still have a few questions:
1) Can the Japanese Super Famicom or US Super NES (SCART versions) be used on *any* British TV with a 21-pin SCART socket?
2) Because of the voltage difference between the UK and US power supply, will a special power supply be needed to use a US SNES over here?
3) Is it true that adaptors can blow a fuse in your machine because two carts are used at once?
Jason Wood, Warley, West Midlands.

1) No. Both machines output the same 60Hz signal, but a few problems have surfaced. While modern SCART TVs are designed to display a 50Hz PAL picture, they must be able to detect a 60Hz signal for a SCART machine to run on them. Sony and Philips TVs tend to be a safe bet, but many new models from manufacturers across the board are now incorporating this feature. If you want to find out if your TV can detect a 60Hz signal, check the manual first (if you can find it!), and if you're still not sure ring the manufacturer quoting the TV's model number (look on the back of the TV) and year of make, too, if possible. Remember – some modern TVs say 50Hz on the back, but also support a 60Hz picture.

If your TV has 60Hz technology built in then you can either run a SCART console through it, or a 60Hz PAL one that some companies specialise in. Advance Console Entertainment (ACE), (071) 383 0480, in London and DMC Consoles, (0225) 448253, in Bath convert UK machines to 60Hz (full-screen, full speed) for a charge of £50. They also deprotect the machine to allow Japanese and US carts to run without an adaptor (£30), and sell 60Hz PAL versions of the Super Famicom and US Super NES to order.
2) Importers of US machines currently attach the small purple plug from the US power supply (that comes with the SNES when you buy it in the States) to a standard 9/10 volt (around 1 amp) UK power supply. Unless you know what you're doing it's best to buy one of these modified power supplies from an importer – give them the US plug in exchange and they might let you have it a bit cheaper (some importers can't get enough of these).
3) Adaptors encourage grey imports and so Nintendo (and its licencees) will probably tell you exactly that. While we've yet to hear directly from anybody damaging their machine by using an adaptor (apart from someone who reckoned he'd plugged a cart in back to front), if

you don't want to take the risk ACE in London, or Megacom in Nottingham, will deprotect your machine – see 1) above.

Dear Gamefreak,
1) Recently I was on holiday in the US and I saw SNES games for hire in some video stores. Why is this illegal in the UK? You can even hire the SNES itself over there.
2) When is *Super Mario Kart* due for its official UK release?
3) What exactly is the 'Super Magicom'?
4) Why are games so dear over here? £50-£65 is just too steep.
5) Does Capcom plan to bring out the Champion Edition of *Street Fighter II* for the SNES?
Christopher Fullerton (12), Paisley, Scotland.

1) The enormous NES market in the States demanded rental fairly early on – an example of the power of the customer there. The UK console market is relatively young by comparison and rental will take a lot longer to happen, if at all. Until then Nintendo will deflect the shots in order to maintain control over its sales and profits.
2) Some time in December. If you can't wait for it (and we understand if you can't) make sure you get one of the new adaptors that run the import version. (See *Super Play* issue 2.)
3) It's one of a variety of different pirating devices from Taiwan and Hong Kong that sits on top of the SNES and copies cartridges onto computer disks. Games can then be duplicated and played from disk. They *are* illegal, despite what some people may tell you, and like most forms of piracy have the potential to push cartridge prices even higher. Luckily the price of these gadgets (£200-£300) is high enough to prevent most people from buying them. Future carts may prove difficult to copy too, but there's no stopping the persistent pirate.
4) We receive more letters about this than anything else and we sympathise totally. There is no real justification for games costing as much as they do in the UK. With the average cart in the States and Japan priced around £30-£35, and more expensive games like *Street Fighter II* only around a fiver more than that, why does the UK version cost £65?
Unfortunately the price of the import version in the UK has recently gone up about £10 across the board (to about £55) because of the exchange rate crisis, so at the time of writing there's *no* cheap option.
5) I wouldn't be surprised, but the standard version is *almost* like the Champion Edition so it wouldn't really be a worthy purchase for owners of the original. The 'Blackbelt Edition', now seen in some arcades, is one version you won't be seeing on cart – it's a rip-off arcade board from the Far East with some pretty fancy new moves built in! Needless to say, it's illegal!

Dear *Super Play*,
1) Our TV runs through our video but only the video has a SCART socket (Euro-connector). Could I run a US or Japanese SNES through that SCART socket?
2) If yes, would using the UK SCART plug that comes with the UK SNES make any difference to the picture quality?
I hope you are able to answer these questions and congratulations on the biggest and best SNES mag on the market. I loved the free badge.
Ian Campbell, Paisley, Scotland.

Hmm, another Paisley reader. Friends by any chance? Anyway, to answer your questions:

1) The result is usually just a black-and-white picture I'm afraid. It *can* work with some videos, apparently, but don't splash out on the off-chance it might.
2) I doubt it, as the UK SCART plug gives a black-and-white picture with an imported SNES. A SCART lead for an imported machine doesn't work on a UK console either.

WRITE TO US!

If you've got a Super Nintendo question or problem you think Gamefreak might be able to help you with, send it off to us at Gamefreak, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. We'll do our best to find an answer for you, and print it our next issue.

Dear Gamefreak,
1) If I got a SCART US or Japanese SNES, and connected it to a British TV via the SCART socket, would I get a full speed, full screen picture with no borders?
2) Are there two versions of every game for the US SNES – one for the PAL machine and one for the SCART machine – or is there just one version which works on both PAL and SCART machines? Which ones do mail order companies sell?
Michael Young, Buxton, Derbyshire.

1) Usually yes, but see both David Watts' and Jason Wood's letters above.
2) For the Super NES, each country's carts are available in one version only. Perhaps you're confused because imported US carts for the 8-bit NES used to be converted to PAL because no adaptors existed to get round the problem. While UK SNES carts are branded 'PAL version', they will work in any console with an adaptor, be it a Jap, US, PAL, or SCART machine. US and Japanese carts aren't made for the PAL system, but most of them work fine on it with an adaptor. Rest assured we'll let you know which carts are incompatible.

STAR LETTER

Dear *Super Play*,
1) When will the US SNES be available in the shops (not mail order), and how much will it be?
2) Are US carts available in any shops to buy, or is it only through mail order?
3) If you play a UK game on a US or Jap SNES using an adaptor, do you still get the full-screen display?
4) Is there a difference between a SCART TV, and a PAL TV with a SCART socket? I'm confused.
5) In your review of *Street Fighter II* you said that the game had lost some of its arcade look because of screen borders. Is *Street Fighter II* better on a UK PAL machine or on an imported US or Jap SCART one?
6) Is the US SNES the best out of the three machines in terms of quality and price?
Daniel Batt, Burgess Hill, West Sussex.

SF II on an imported 60Hz console. There are already noticeable borders, but it's not as bad as...

...*SF II* on the UK machine. The squashed image makes those borders much worse. It's slower too.

1) & 2) Many of the mail order companies advertising in *Super Play* *are* shops, and have been selling imported machines and games for ages. Some towns now have shops selling imported carts, but don't expect to find any in Dixons or Boots – stick to the small specialist computer or console shops to find them.
3) Yes – the machine determines the screen size, not the cart. (NB the odd game doesn't use a full-screen image anyway, eg *Street Fighter II.*)
4) No – all UK TVs are PAL, irrespective of whether they have a SCART socket or not. All SCART consoles need is a SCART socket.
5) *Street Fighter II* suffers at the hands of a UK PAL machine more than most carts because the game already has borders when running on a full-screen imported Japanese or US console (the programmers needed to keep the speed up this way). Because the UK PAL console squashes the image, the display is especially narrow (and 17% slower too).
6) The US SNES (SCART) is selling large numbers over here because it is cheap and no adaptor is needed for Japanese games. It is currently the best buy *if* you have a SCART TV or a SCART monitor. The Japanese Super Famicom could soon be as cheap due to recent Japanese price cuts, but an adaptor is needed to run US games. It's worth bearing in mind that the first CD ROM system to appear late next year will probably be the Japanese one. If you intend to buy the Jap CD ROM it might be best to get a Japanese machine (Super Famicom) – the only one guaranteed to work with it.

● Every month the writer of the Gamefreak Star Letter receives a fabulous *Super Play* T-shirt!

MODE 7

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME FREAKS!

Why Mode 7? Errr... Oh yeah – because, just as Mode 7 graphics are the best money can buy, Mode 7 tips are the ultimate in illicit gaming advice.

Gaming expert Adrian Price makes an appearance to answer your queries with breathtaking aplomb. Write to him at the address below and he'll be able to help.

Mode 7 depends on your help, though. If you've got *anything* in the cheats 'n' tips line you think might be of use to *Super Play* readers, send it in. The senders of the best tips each month will get a *Super Play* T-shirt, and the rest we use will get a *Super Play* pen. Write to **Mode 7, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.**

Super Mario Kart

Nintendo

Oh no! What's happened to Mario. Phew, it's okay, we've used the cheat!

We thought we'd given you the definitive guide to *Mario Kart* last month. But we were wrong! Now, we could simply have thrown away Nathan Wilkins of Calne's letter and pretended it had never happened. But, after trying his tips out and finding how absolutely tremendous they were, we thought we'd better come clean. So, here they are:

TIP NO. 1

On the character select screen, pressing Y and A together will shrink your character.

TIP NO. 2

You can actually race against yourself on the one-player Time Trial. All you've got to do is start the game and race round. Then, race again on the same track and you'll find yourself competing against a 'ghost' character, who does everything you did on your last race. Each time you race after that, the ghost character will emulate your best performance so far.

TIP NO. 3

To race against any computer opponent, select a one-player time trial, and press Start on Pad 2 to select a computer-controlled character.

UN Squadron

Capcom

The best game of its type – that's our opinion of *UN Squadron*. We were therefore delighted when Graham, one of our 'production' people, popped up to tell us about some secret(ish) pick-ups he'd found. They're dotted about the screen at various points in the game, but are invisible until you shoot them.

On level one there's a smart bomb hidden fairly near the start of the level.

There's another smart bomb on the enemy airforce level...

...and, later on, a fuel recharge that will help with that giant stealth bomber.

The battleship level boasts a unicorn, which makes you invincible for a bit...

... and a pick-up that'll top up your extra weapons, too.

There's a smart bomb hidden in the cave on the land carrier level.

There are lots more pick-ups for *UN Squadron*, of course – this is just to give you an idea of where to start looking. Graham also pointed out that that the weapons select button still works after you've paused the game, so you can choose the right weapon in a rather more relaxed environment.

Have you spotted any other secret pick-ups of your own? Well, then, we'd like to hear from you. Write and tell us at our usual address (see above).

ASK ADE

INVALUABLE MONTHLY GAMING ADVICE

Well, I'm back. It's my second proper outing in *Super Play*, and your letters are really starting to flood in – the only problem is finding the space to answer them all. (Oh yes, and finding out the actual answers of course.) Remember, if you're stuck on a game, write to me at the address given at the end of this column and I'll do my best to help you out. Right, now on with your queries...

● I have got pretty far in *Super Mario World*, but just can't get past the Forest Of Illusion. I'm stuck, basically. What do I do now?
Carl Gleaves, Bolton.

● Sorry, this is an impossible question to answer. Which levels *exactly* can't you get past? You see, you can play the game in pretty much any order, so apart from coming round your house and seeing exactly where it is you're stuck there's very little I can say. However, here are two general tips:
1) Take each level very slowly. The time limits are quite generous, and if you take care you should be able (after a few attempts) to complete the Forest of Illusion, no problem.
2) Check out Rich Pelley's complete guide to the game on page 63 this issue. It might just tell you exactly what you need to know.

● I have heard that there is a cheat for the SNES version of *Street Fighter II*, effectively turning it into the coin-op *Street Fighter '92*. If there is one, could you please tell me what it is?
Ross Farmer, Stoke Poges.

● If you bought the first issue of *Super Play* (and I suspect you did), there's a cheat for *SFII* in there. But I'll repeat it anyway. When the Capcom logo appears, press DOWN, R button, UP, L button, Y, B, X, A. This will now let you play character vs character. However, what it won't let you do is play as the boss characters – there's no cheat for that in the game.

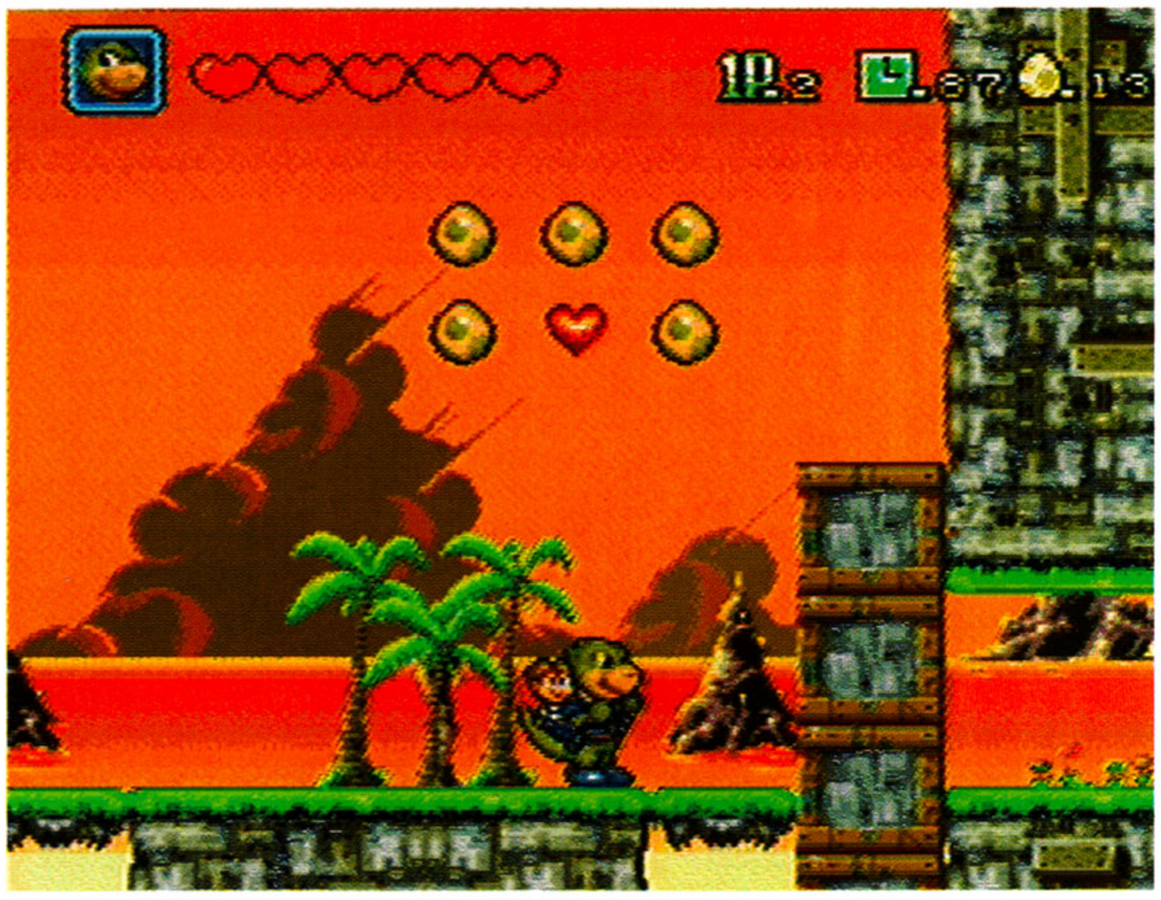
● I know *Super EDF* hasn't come out in

Looks like Krusty's just taken a rather nasty beating...

Krusty's Super Funhouse

Acclaim

Krusty's Super Funhouse, eh? Tricky, isn't it? But not if you've got a tip. And – wow! – what have we got here? A tip! On the password screen, enter '_JOSHUA' (that's a space followed by JOSHUA). That'll give you unlimited Krusties, and access to all the rooms, and you'll be able to replenish your energy by pressing L and R together.



Easy, but completely irresistible – that was our verdict on *Dinosaurs*. Just look at it!

Dinosaurs

Irem

If you're having trouble with *Dinosaurs* here are some codes, from Michael Sullivan of Solihull.

Level 1: 8CH2ZES3H4RM
Level 2: XK0KTES1H43Y
Level 3: 5C6X9ES9HF24
Level 4: XK0MTESWHVD4
Level 5: XK2B9ES0HN94

Datel Action Replay Hot Tip

Fancy a super fast version of *Street Fighter II*? With a Datel Action Replay cart this is possible. Simply enter this code, and watch those fighters move:

7E0C6001

Ken and Ryu battle it out in superspeed!

this country yet, but I've got an American version and I'm a bit stuck. Have you got any cheats for it?
James Burne, Coventry.

● Indeed I have – in fact I was sent a couple of good ones by a chap named Bruce McClure from Newton Stewart in Scotland quite recently. Try this: at any time during the game, pause, then press these buttons. A, B, X, Y, L button, R button, UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT. Now, when you restart, you should be completely invulnerable. However, it's not a perfect cheat – it stops working after you've finished a level, so you'll have to enter it in again to get it back.

● I've been playing *Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* for ages, but each time I do so the same problem occurs. I get right to the end of the game, but Guinevere keeps sending me back to the beginning to get her magic. Please could you tell me where it is, and how I get it.
Lewis Sparshatt, Selsey.

● Ah, you've got me there – to be perfectly honest, I really haven't played this game enough to get that far. There is a level select cheat, which we printed in issue 1 – to quickly recap, go to the option screen, move to exit, hold down the L button and START on controller two, press START on controller one, and you'll be in a special stage select screen – but apart from that I'm just as stuck as you are. This is where I throw the problem open to other *Super Play* readers. Come on, if you can help Lewis out, write to me at the address at the end of this column, and I'll print it next issue.

● Please could you print some passcodes for *Krusty's Super Fun House*, as all the American codes I've seen don't seem to work on the official UK version.
James Tuffin, Clacton.

● You're right – they don't work, and we haven't worked any out for the UK version ourselves yet. (We normally play the American one in the office ourselves.) So, it's cop out time again. If anyone can help, please write in and let us know. At the usual address.

● On *Prince of Persia* (Level 15), your shadow appears, and seems to challenge you. Do you have to fight him, and, if so, how do you beat him? Also, where is the exit?
Mark Eaves, Lancs.

● No, you don't have to fight your shadow – a common mistake. Instead, as soon as he appears, simply put your sword back in its sheath. Your shadow should now disappear, enabling you to pass. As for the exit, you're going to have to work that one out for yourself. There are some codes in last month's ish which might help, or maybe another reader could put you out of your misery through the auspices of this column.

● Well, that's all the space I've been allotted this ish – if you want to see my column get slightly bigger next issue (sorry, couldn't resist the odd Dominik Diamond-ism), why not write to the Ed and demand that it does so, eh? In the meantime, keep writing in with your questions – and, of course, the answers to the ones I'm stuck on – and we'll see what we can do. The address is, as ever, Ask Ade, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Be seeing you.

Action Replay Codes

Remember, before you can use any of these handy cheat codes – and they are handy, just check them out – you'll need to get hold of an Action Replay cart. (See the special offer on page 97.)

Game	Effect	Code
Axelay	Infinite lives	7E005E03
Contra III	Infinite lives	7E1F8A07
	Infinite shields	7E1F8901
Darius Twin	Infinite lives	7E106803
F-Zero	Infinite energy	7E00CA08 7E0CF301
Hole in One	Two shots per hole	7E10A102
Street Fighter II	Better dragon punch	7E0C3210
Super Soccer	No opposition keeper	7E10F80C

The men to thank for those are Barry Clough of Dunfermline and Mark Gomm of Stoke on Trent. They'll both receive a *Super Play* pen.

***Lemmings*: A cute, well animated and successful game with *130* levels.**

Lemmings
(Sunsoft)

Here are the codes for all 125 levels, which were lovingly faxed through to us by Steve Austen of Brighton. Cheers, Steve – you're one in six million! (Geddit?)

Fun Level

1	VLQXPGC
2	FWKQCJK
3	TWXZKRM
4	JPJXFVW
5	KTJGTJK
6	HGNNNPX
7	MLLBCPQ
8	XBVCKLL
9	JWGWBK
10	JJGKQPH
11	PWKZSXL
12	GGWWFXR
13	PPTDZZG
14	TPVSDSC
15	QSPRKMK
16	BXCHLQS
17	VDGQWSX
18	QGNLNFM
19	DNPFNQR
20	FQKKFHL
21	RMHDGBX
22	ZGBVCXV
23	ZXBLWZK
24	HTLDXLB
25	ZDGHTWD
26	CFHXPSM
27	PZBXCXB
28	CWLGDPT
29	WDNLSMJ
30	WBZWWCB

Tricky Level

1	WXRRTMV
2	SVZFJVM
3	BNLDXVC
4	FNGWLWW
5	RWHTQBK
6	GGVQQDZ
7	RTWHNTC
8	FBMBPFD
9	GTGCDKQ
10	KSRXKVK
11	TBHLCRC
12	XVJKXBQ
13	TMRSZMF
14	CVSDHLF
15	WXLBGBP
16	WZNFLWF
17	FVMTNWW
18	VVDRGWD
19	SRXBPPV
20	GRZHRPP
21	XTMWFCP
22	FLMTVPM
23	KSGVVWK
24	ZBPPBXG
25	WHCHBQV
26	LHDPGNV
27	HVLXXTH
28	STVNDPK
29	JFTQVSX
30	SKKWSZD

Taxing Level

1	SFLQQWR
2	LGJMTCD
3	BWNQXRZ
4	NGHQVRF
5	NRQKFRC
6	QRXZLSK
7	VGPDDWR
8	HPKBCCX
9	DSWLCTG
10	GWGCJHK
11	TNJVCGD
12	XKBFSBD
13	VKKCSFV
14	SJKNWWS
15	DQDGCBX
16	QTVGPTH
17	PFFFLPS
18	BPNRSMC
19	JLGKBCZ
20	PCVKZVR
21	QNWFKVZ
22	NTHZDKK
23	XQZSRDT
24	PTPMJDV
25	LXTZBHP
26	RLQGWSX
27	MHKNCDK
28	KWGCKWD
29	RKVHCBS
30	MGVJBKZ

Mayhem Level

1	QGSMMDM
2	KKSXKFK
3	NNBLXNL
4	JCPMTPC
5	TNPPCLS
6	RCPXPMD
7	GXZTLVK
8	LSWHMHR
9	SDRMFLF
10	HSHQXPK
11	CHBMWRF
12	LNRGMXC
13	WPSKBXN
14	LPBDVJJ
15	BGMLGSS
16	CZLMVGD
17	KVXLSQH
18	CQSSXRQ
19	MVRPMQJ
20	PMXDHBP
21	TWQBCXL
22	WVVFXWB
23	BSLMGQZ
24	MGGLXSF
25	DXBZRVX
26	BWQNKVK
27	RTBGJWD
28	HMGDJCQ
29	QZTJHSV
30	CQLRCHF

Sunsoft Levels

1	GNNBJWV
2	RCQRFPZ
3	FBJJKJB
4	RMQMZDC
5	DTCZVMQ

F-Zero
(Nintendo)

F-Zero (or Fuzzero as it's known here at *Super Play*) (*Not to me it isn't – Ed.*) is a bit of all right. Here are three special top tips for it:

Belting down the backstraight to victory with our fab tips.

● For what Anon of Sunderland describes as a 'mega start', hold down the accelerator before the race starts. Then, when you get the green light, drive in front of the nearest opponent. He'll crash into the back of you and give you a big push forward.

● If you get a Super Jet on Port Town 2, and head left after crossing the starting line, you'll come across a jump. Just before you hit it, activate the Super Jet and steer right. You'll fly to the opposite side of the track. That's if Rhys Booth of Caldicot is to be believed, anyway.

● Finally, Paul Olszak of Harlow reminds us that if you complete the King League on Expert level, you'll be able to try your hand at a new Master level. Needless to say, it's jolly difficult indeed.

Gradius 3
(Konami)

This is possibly the simplest cheat we've ever printed, or are ever likely to print. For extra credits, just push the X button rapidly on the title screen. And that's it. We've got Bruce McClure of Wigtown, Newton Stewart in Scotland to thank for that one.

Looks like the undergrowth has got out of hand here – or are they Triffids?

It may be boring, but it *is* very cute.

Spanky's Quest
(Natsume)

This is 'boring', according to What Cart?, *Super Play*'s definitive guide to Super Nintendo games. Despite being a bit boring, *Spanky's Quest* still merits investigation, which may be made easier by the following codes:

Level 2: 732
Level 3: 354
Level 4: 116
Level 5: 988
Level 6: 470

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PLAY BACK

HYPER EXCITING READER'S VOICE

This month: the pleasure of Anime; the pain of Japanese manuals; the indifference of Nintendo; dodgy hardware; map blues; how to ruin your complexion; and how *not* to blag a Super Nintendo. Oh yes, if it's happening, it's happening here in Play Back...

'I DASHED FOR THE VIDEO SECTION'

I bought your magazine after recognising Wil Overton's fine artwork on the cover, as I dashed for the video section of a famous high street shop to buy the latest Manga Video releases.

Thank goodness someone can give anime a push into the light. Helen McCarthy and those at *Anime World* do a good job, but, as they've probably told you, they're not a big publication like you.

Please give us more anime/SNES connections each month. We anime fans can do with all the help and information you can give us.

I'll keep buying each issue, but please – more anime connections!

Your sincerely,
Paul Spann, Kemworth.

'MY ANTICIPATION TURNED TO JOY'

Since the Anime section has as yet been unmentioned in Play Back, I thought I'd better say something before someone says it's irrelevant to the SNES. Okay, here it is: 'Brilliant'.

I bought the first issue of *Super Play* mainly because Matt Bielby and Jonathan Davies were writing for it, and because I was yet to find a good SNES magazine. My anticipation turned to sheer joy as I flicked through the pages. The thoroughness and smart humour have been brought over from the fab *Amiga Power* and the added anime feature makes it the best read in yonks! Peter Molyneux's Tokyo Diary in issue 2 was brilliant.

Yours sincerely,
Ben Ford, Kidderminster.

'LED BY THE NOSE'

I am writing to congratulate you on the brilliant first issue of *Super Play*. I have been a video and computer games fan for over 10 years now, and have been a regular reader of magazines, but have never in all this time been compelled to buy a magazine simply for its cover – until now. Whoever designed it deserves an immediate pay rise for their inspiration. The contents (love the Japanese influence!) are of an all-round high quality, too, not seen since the early days of *ST/Amiga Format* (I'm still an *ST Format* subscriber) – a superb read.

The reason I mention most of this is that there seems to be an abundance of questionnaires in this first issue asking the readers what *they* want. You have a winner in every department, so don't be led by the nose by what a hundred readers trying to win T-shirts say they want! Trust your own instincts, because this is a really great product and people will be attracted by that alone.

All the best,
William Bennett, Edinburgh.

Rest assured, we are going to continue to trust our own instincts. However – and it might sound corny – we also want to make sure we're giving our readers what they want, rather than what *we think* they want. To that end, we've had lots of very good suggestions from our issue one reader survey, many of which we're planning to implement. (We've had lots of really silly ones too, mind...)

'I WOULD LIKE TO BE A PROGRAMMER...'

When I'm older I would like to be a games programmer. Could you tell me how to go about it, what subjects to take at school and what qualifications I would need. If you have any telephone numbers or names and addresses you could give me I would be very grateful.

Yours sincerely,
Anthony Taylor, Sunderland.

The only qualification you need to make it as a programmer is to be really, really good at programming. So buy yourself something like a PC or an Amiga, along with a good book on programming, and lock yourself in your bedroom until you've worked out how to do it. Finally, send some of the things you've written to Britain's top games publishers and see what they say. Oh, and another thing – it also helps to grow your hair long and listen to lots of heavy metal music.

'PLEASE SEND ME A SEPER NES'

Please send me a Seper NES. I ham pulling my hair out to get one. I will give you my Sega Master System if you give me one.

Yours faithly,
John Bacon, Knottingley.

Sounds tempting, John, and if we had a Seper NES we'd send you one. However, as all we've got is our Super Nintendo, which we need for doing reviews and stuff, we can't help out. Sorry.

'COLD AND QUITE HOSTILE'

I recently saw an advert for the 'Super Magicom' and initially thought it was another console. I phoned one of your rival mags and asked them what it was. Frankly, I was surprised at the response. The magazine squad were cold and hostile, unlike the *Super Play* team who were friendly and informative, especially Jason who gave me advice about my Super Famicom and *Out of this World*. Thanks!

After getting no help from the rival squad I found out from a friend that it was a cartridge copier and that they are perfectly legal. This fact sent me reeling with anger, as before I bought my console I owned an Amiga and left the market because it was dying due to piracy.

If piracy spreads to consoles they will probably die the same way, with game prices rising in price and dropping in quality.

Your sincerely,
Gary Jones, Harrogate.

I did a bit of checking up, and I don't think there's much to worry about for now. These cartridge copying devices most certainly *aren't* legal, and Bandai are clamping down on dealers that import them from the Far East. Even if the devices were freely available, they are complex, expensive pieces of hardware and would be unlikely to find a large market.

'EVEN A PHOTOCOPY'

I was very impressed with your first issue, and I hope future editions are of the same standard.

One of the major problems with the SNES is the shortage of UK releases. This is why I bought myself a convertor. My first two games were *Hook* and *Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* – the Japanese versions. It was only when I got home that I realised the manuals were in Japanese. Surely after paying £45 you'd think the importer or retailer would put an English manual inside. Even a photocopy would do. Instead you have to suffer hours of getting to grips with the game and not knowing if you have missed something important out on the playing side.

Yours faithfully,
Shaun Holden, Bolton.

Buying import games has both advantages – like getting games ages before they come out over here – and disadvantages. Like you say, Japanese games have Japanese manuals. I'm afraid you're stuck with them – most importers don't know enough Japanese (and certainly don't have enough time) to translate the manual of every import game they get in for you. And there's no way an importer could get away with photocopying English manuals – such things don't usually exist for these games, for a start. The solution, if your Japanese isn't too hot, is to buy the American version of a cart whenever possible. Anyway, why do you want instructions for *Hook* and *Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*? Playing *them* is obvious...

'MY ONLY GRIPE'

First, I'm writing to congratulate you on the best Super Nintendo magazine on the market. I say that because your reviews are concise and to the point, and really helpful for a quick guide to what to buy.

My only gripe is that you keep on printing maps. Maps are helpful, but if you're having a good time playing a game, and then you read the map showing you how to do a level or find a secret room, then it completely spoils the fun of the game. I know I don't have to look at the maps, but someone else normally does and then tells me where the secret rooms are – not something I wanted to know.

Yours sincerely,
Neil Robinson, Newark.

Like you said yourself, Neil, you don't *have* to look at the maps. Besides, I bet if we asked everyone who *liked* our maps to write in and say so, pretty soon our letter box would be suffering from friction burns.

'I'D HATE TO THINK'

Being a Super Nintendo owner, I was extremely impressed to see upon reading October's edition of *Total!* that *Super Play* was to hit the streets.

Upon buying the first issue, however, I was a little confused as to why the cover of my issue differed to the one illustrated in *Total!*. They both say 'November 92' on them. I'd be most grateful for an explanation, as I'd hate to think I had missed out on any Super info.

Yours in anticipation, C Thompson, Wolverhampton.

Okay, here's your explanation. The time: the middle of last July. The place: a deserted office at Future Publishing. The door bursts open, and the newly-assembled *Super Play* team stumbles in and starts arguing about who's going to sit where. Minutes later, *Total!*'s art editor sticks his head round the door and says he needs a *Super Play* cover, by tomorrow, for an advert he's doing. The result: lots of shouting and running around, followed by the hasty assembly of a purple sheet of paper, a picture of fighter pilot and a *Super Play* logo. The *real* cover – which appeared on the magazine you bought – came much, much later.

'RING A MAJOR'

The naff title aside (*What?!? - Ed*), there's no denying that your magazine is by far the best on the market for Super Nintendo owners.

The feature on the history of the Super NES is the point of my letter, as I found it fascinating reading and a real eye-opener.

A theory that I hold regarding Nintendo's lack of commitment and drive into the UK/Euro market is that they've done some research, which has indicated to them that a recession-ravaged continent may not be the healthiest market for a new home entertainment product.

In a sense, they were using the Sega Mega Drive as a guinea pig, just waiting in the wings until they were sure it was safe to introduce their more technologically advanced machine. But, until the time was right, they also decided to sell rights to Sega to produce Nintendo titles for the Mega Drive, so as to still cash in on Sega's head start.

My brother is in the business of selling consoles, and tells me that the Mega Drive is still outselling the SNES, although I did ring a major department store and their manager said sales were about even.

I'm not in the business of knocking the Mega Drive, as my brother owns one and I love going round to his house for tea and a game of *Sonic*, and likewise he does for *Mario*, but I would like to know whether, now the SNES has its foot firmly in the door, Nintendo have any intention of actually buying Sega titles and then producing them on the Super NES. Because, let's face it, although we do like to think the SNES is a superior machine, you can get some pretty amazing games for the Mega Drive that would and should look pretty stunning on the Super Nintendo.

Yours sincerely,
Dominic Whitehead, Halifax.

A conspiracy theory to put Guy Fawkes himself to shame. In answer to your question, you can already play top Mega Drive game *John Madden Football* on your Super Nintendo (well, sort of anyway) and the brilliant *Desert Strike* is hot on its heels. In fact, it's a virtual certainty that if a game does really well on the Mega Drive it'll be heading Super Nintendo-ward in no time at all. (*Sonic* aside, of course...)

'NOBODY WANTS TO BUY PILOTWINGS'

I recently went to my local shop to buy *Pilotwings*, but to my surprise, when I got there, the dealer said he was not taking in any more copies of the game. He said it was because *Wings II* was much better, and nobody wants to buy *Pilotwings*.

This means I'll have to buy my copy from down south. Could you please tell me if the dealer is right that *Wings II* is so much better that to buy *Pilotwings* would be stupid.

I have received my *Akira* video and I think it's excellent, and that everyone with a Super Nintendo should subscribe to your brilliant magazine.

Yours sincerely,
S Dalgarno, Inverness.

So do we. As for *Pilotwings*, well, it's one of the best SNES games ever, and your shopkeeper would be bonkers if he stopped stocking it. About the only thing *Pilotwings* and *Wings II* have in common is aeroplanes. Apart from that, they're completely different styles of game. Oh, and we'd rate *Pilotwings* quite a bit higher than *Wings II* – there's so much more to it.

'THE JAPANESE DON'T LIKE US'

First, I would like to say that *Super Play* is the best magazine ever, and also that I now have *Super Play* and *Total!* delivered monthly.

Then, I would like to ask you some questions:

1) If you and *Total!* are published by the same company, then how come you both grade games differently? *Total!* said *Exhaust Heat* was brilliant and you gave it 69%. You gave *Rival Turf* 58% and *Total!* gave it 70%. Why is this?

2) Why is it that Britain seems to have problems with consoles and other countries don't – eg we have to have borders on our SNES'. Is this because the Japanese don't like us?

3) Could you make Game-freak look nicer than just green

(issue 2)?
4) Is there going to be a 10-game holder to store my games in, because at the moment I have a home-made cardboard one?

I would like to congratulate you on an excellent magazine (*Total!* as well), and I would never consider those other magazines that take the mickey out of their readers.

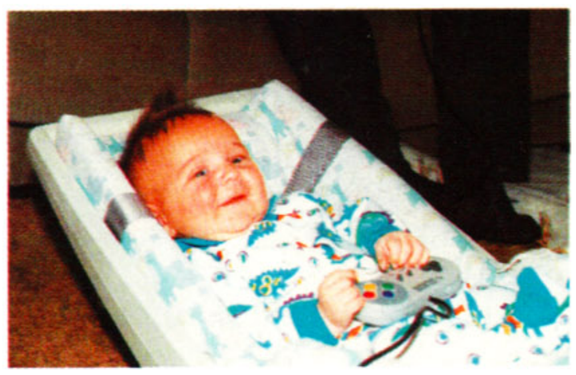
Kind regards,
M J Turner, Macclesfield.

Okay:
1) *Total!* might be produced in the same building as *Super Play*, but we don't go in there much. (It smells a bit funny, for a start.) In the case of *Exhaust Heat* and *Rival Turf*, well, we disagreed. Simple as that.
2) We phoned them up to check, and they said that actually they think we're okay. So it can't be that.
3) We tried painting him all sorts of other colours, and even putting a bag over his head, but nothing seemed to work.
4) If you check out Superstore on page 97 you should find what you're looking for. (It'll only hold eight carts, though, so you'll have to buy two!)

'THE YOUNGEST SUPER NES PLAYER'

I thought you might like to see this photo of my son Alan James playing *Zelda III* on the Super Nintendo. He came to see you at the Future Entertainment Show on Friday 6 November and came up on stage as the youngest Super Nintendo player at four months. You gave him some 'shades' so that he could be a real cool dude, and he wears them with pride.

Yours,
Elaine Collins, Bracknell.



Our youngest reader (to date), Alan James, from Bracknell. Isn't he cute...?

'BEING QUITE GOOD AT GAMES'

I read in another magazine (*Control*) that *Super Mario Kart* has a limited number of courses and would be easy to finish in a day or two. Being quite good at games (I completed *Super Mario World* on my second day), I was wondering if this is true, because I'm interested in buying it and, at my wages, I can't afford to spend money on games that won't last me very long.

Your sincerely,
Richard Gillis, Dyfed.

Describing *Super Mario Kart* as 'too easy' is completely missing the point. Even if you manage to finish all the courses, you'll have such fun that you'll want to do it again and again. Then, of course, you can play a friend, either racing against him or taking him on in the fab balloon game. Besides, the mag you mention seemed to totally forget about the five Special courses, and the tough 150cc option you get if you finish them all. (If you find *that* too easy, perhaps you ought to offer your services to Williams or McLaren.) Nope, *Mario Kart* is brilliant,

No room!

NO ROOM!

And that, I'm afraid, is all we've got time for. However, as ever we're dying to hear from you. If you've got something you want to say, some question to ask, or just fancy praising us a bit (we don't mind, honest) write to us at PLAY BACK, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Don't be a stranger!

FREE ADS! Get 'em while they're hot!

SUPERMARKET

This month sees *Super Play*'s free reader ad section snowballing, with more adverts than the last two issues put together! This is hardly surprising, as we didn't have *any* in the first issue, and only a handful last month, but still, good news all the same, eh? Of course, it could be something to do with the fact that all supermarket adverts are completely free! Whether you're selling something, swapping something, looking to buy something, or simply hoping to make new SNES friends, Supermarket is the place to come. (Or send your adverts to, anyway.)

HARDWARE FOR SALE

● Amiga 500 for sale. 1 Meg RAM, two joysticks, mouse and mat. Loads of top games like *RoboCod*, *Speedball 2*, *Kick Off 2*. £250 ono Tel: (0734) 422033.
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WHAT CART?

SUPER PLAY'S GAME LIBRARY

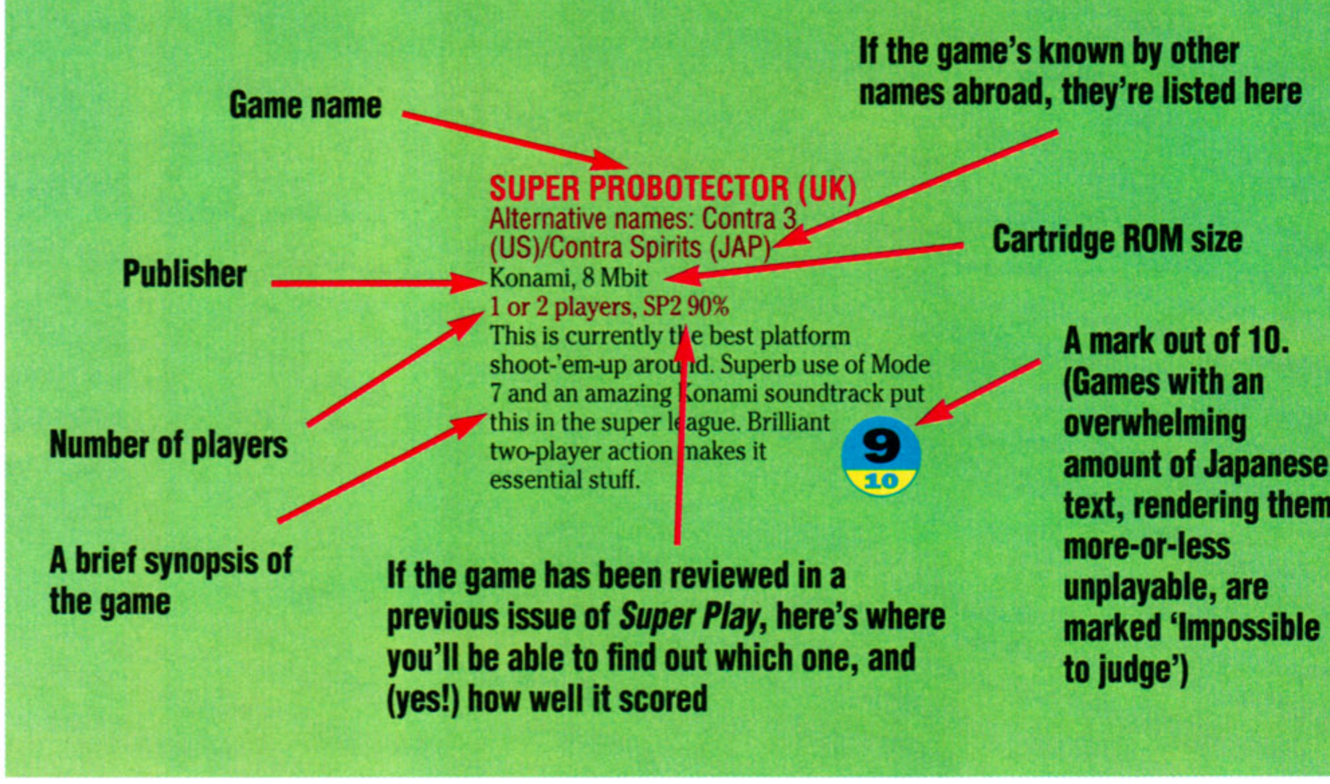
It's long, it's comprehensive, and now it's 'new and improved' too! What Cart? is *Super Play*'s comprehensive guide to all the major Super Nintendo and Super Famicom games available in this country, be they official releases or on import. That's right - every single one! About 140 games, altogether. ('About 140 games!' - the rest of the team.) There's a mini-review of each one, along with a mark out of 10 and a few other bits and bobs to ensure you're completely in the picture.

• Plus! This month we've made a few changes to What Cart? Gone is the practice of dividing everything up into different categories of game (too complicated.) Instead, we've gone for a straightforward alphabetical order, which should make it a bit quicker for you to find the game you want. We've also thrown in a few 'Top Fives' dotted around the place, to give you an at-a-glance guide to some of the best games available.

• Do you know of a game that's somehow slipped through What Cart?'s net, and hasn't been listed? You do? Then write in with the details of it and a brief review, and we'll try to include it in the next issue. In return, you'll get a mention in the magazine and a *Super Play* pen. Write to What Cart?, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. (Sorry: 'please'.)

KEY TO YOUR CHART

You wouldn't believe how easy *What Cart?* is to understand. Perhaps this diagram might go some way to convincing you, though:



ACROBAT MISSION (JAP)
Teichiku, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 38%
A despicably feeble vertical scroller. (Not a good start.)
3/10

ACTRAISER (JAP/US/UK)
Enix/Quintet, 6/8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 90%
A brilliant combination of strategy and platform action. Graphically it's very well done, but the visuals are left eating dust by the outstanding music. Make sure you buy the UK or US version – it's much more playable with English text!
9/10

THE ADDAMS FAMILY (JAP/US/UK)
Ocean, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 82%
Not the last word in platform games by any means, but this is still a polished and enjoyable romp. A large game, featuring well-integrated adventure, puzzle and shoot-'em-up elements, providing an addictive challenge that gets quite frustrating in places, although a helpful password system allows fairly quick completion.
8/10

AGURI SUZUKI F1 SUPER DRIVING (JAP)
LOZC, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Fast, 3D Mode 7 courses *and* tunnels and bridges? We were surprised, anyway. This game is extremely well presented, but suffers from the unfortunate no-warning-of-corners problem that seems to plague so many Super Nintendo driving games. If you can live with that, however, the split-screen two-player mode is a definite bonus.
7/10

AIR MANAGER (JAP)
Koei, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players
Unfortunately unintelligible unless you're fluent in Japanese, this is a quite well presented business strategy thing along the lines of *Railroad Tycoon*. Nice Mode 7 intro. Impossible to judge.
?/10

ARCANA (US)
Alternative name: Card Master (JAP)
HAL, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
An RPG based around a 3D perspective (like *Dungeon Master*) sounds good, but it suffers from a very plodding pace – the combat scenes are particularly long and drawn out. Graphically it's not bad, and the music is well done, but only really recommended for die-hard RPG fans.
6/10

ASTRAL BOUT (JAP)
A-Wave, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A wrestling/fighting game, and not a very good one at that. Graphically not a complete disaster, but the sprite collision and playability are very ropy. Fighters hobble around the screen like they've got stones in their shoes and, when you think you could buy *Street Fighter II* instead, what's the point?
4/10

AUGUSTA MASTERS 3D GOLF (JAP)
T&E Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players
The first 3D golf game on the Super Famicom, and still rather good despite Japanese text. Graphically, it's a mixture of bit-maps and polygons and it works quite well. The screen update could be faster, though.
8/10

AXELAY (JAP/US)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 player
Okay, so *Axelay*'s a little thin gameplay-wise. But – ooh! – those graphics! They're quite possibly the most impressive ones ever! There are also some mind-boggling baddies, and the game alternates between horizontal and vertical scrolling, which is neat.
8/10

BART'S NIGHTMARE (US)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 91%
The formula may not sound promising – lots of little sub-games rather than one big one – but this is absolutely superb, and very weird. Wonderful graphics and lots of humour, and it's challenging.
9/10

BATTLEBLAZE (JAP)
Sammy Corp, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
An awkward game that's nowhere near as good as its contemporaries (in this case *Street Fighter II* and *Ranma 1/2*). Graphics are okay, the sound's okay, it plays okay and there's a reasonable range of moves, but you could do much better.
5/10

BATTLE GRAND PRIX (JAP)
Naxat, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Remember *Super Sprint*, the coin-op? Well, imagine a version of it (ie an overhead view driving game) where you can only see a tiny area of the track around your car, and have to rely on little signals to warn you of corners. We had a bit of trouble with this one, eventually coming to the conclusion that it's 'challenging'. Lots of babes in it, though.
6/10

BIG RUN (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 player
After a promising front end, and a couple of good tunes, the abysmal graphics and virtually non-existent gameplay make for what is surely the worst driving game on the system. (Nothing like the original coin-op.)
2/10

BILL LAIMBEER'S COMBAT BASKETBALL (US)
Hudson Soft, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Originally an Amiga game called *Future Basketball*, this plodding speedball clone is a surprisingly poor release from Hudson Soft.
2/10

BLAZEON (JAP/US)
Atlus, 8 Mbit
1 player
A tacky horizontal scroller with anime-style robots in. It's kinda different, but everything's so crude and jerky. That makes this game crap – there are so many better shoot-'em-ups to choose from.
3/10

BOMBUZAL
Alternative name: Ka-Blooey (US)
Kemco, 4 Mbit
1 player
You have to clear bombs from mazes of tiles by setting off chain reactions, without getting blown up yourself – the levels are well designed and take lots of skill to negotiate. But (sigh) the graphics are dreary, and, strangely, it's boring to play.
4/10

CAMELTRY (JAP)
Alternative name: On The Ball (US)
Taito, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 52%
The idea of a rotating Mode 7 maze with a ball bouncing around it is a good one, but Taito haven't got the most from it. The levels are too easy to complete, and once you've seen them all you won't return.
5/10

CB WARS (JAP)
Banpresto, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A strange anime-scroll-along-and-wack-nasties-with-whatever-you-can-find-type of game. RPG elements and lots of Japanese text render this a poor choice for most people. Impossible to judge.
?/10

CHESSMASTER (US)
Mindscape, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
If you're after a chess game you really don't have much choice. This plays a strong game (we, er, think), but there's room for improvement. It's really awfully presented, and the tunes after each move – ridiculous idea as it is – are more irritating than you'd believe possible. And check out that amazing menu!
5/10

DARIUS TWIN (JAP/US)
Taito, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Lacking in levels for a *Darius* game – but this isn't all bad news. Good graphics, reasonable sound and not too much slow-down for an early title make it a reasonable buy, though it's not challenging enough in the first few levels.
7/10

D FORCE (JAP/US)
Asmik, 8 Mbit
1 player
An absolutely appalling shoot-'em-up with maybe the worst graphics, sound and playability on the SNES. Subtle use of Mode 7 gives the useless visuals a

'lovely' blocky appearance – not one to show off to your friends. Dreadful sound, too. Leave well alone!

2/10

DINOSAURS (JAP)
Alternative name: Dino City (US)
Irem, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 83%
One of *Super Play*'s very favourite platform games ever, this has brilliant graphics, cute characters and plenty of amusing moments. The snag is, it's miles too easy to finish. But we love it all the same.

8/10

DIRTY CHALLENGER (JAP)
8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Yet another dire wrestling game. This time it includes some very dubious 'grapples' – you could be mistaken for thinking it was all a bit, well, dirty.

3/10

DRAGON BALL Z (JAP)
Bandai, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
The original Japanese *Dragon Ball* anime series has appeared on the 8-bit Famicom (NES), but this new version is the first available for the Super Famicom. Basically, an RPG with combat scenes and enough Japanese text to scare away the most persistent gamer. Extremely 8-bit in look too. Impossible to judge.

?/10

DRAGON'S LAIR (UK)
Elite, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP1 82%
This looks gorgeous, plays well and is far better than the straight conversion of the coin-op that other machines have suffered. But the frustrating difficulty level hides a game not as lengthy as it might have been.

8/10

DRAKKHEN (JAP/US)
Kemco, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Based on a French 16-bit computer RPG/adventure, this has reasonable graphics but an awful combat system. Most people will find this a real bore – even avid RPG fans – but if you *are* tempted, make sure you get the US version (obviously!).

6/10

EARTHLIGHT (JAP)
Hudson Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Based on a popular PC Engine game called *Nectaris*, this is an interplanetary space strategy affair, but there's enough Japanese in here to make it pretty tricky to work out. Avoid. Impossible to judge.

?/10

EXTRA INNINGS (JAP/US)
Alternative name: Ganba League Baseball (JAP)
Sony Imagesoft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players
Baseball's tricky to translate well to a games machine, but this probably makes the best job of it, with cute characters and slick action. If you really must have a baseball game, then go for this one.

7/10

F-1 EXHAUST HEAT (JAP)
Alternative names: F1 ROC (US), Exhaust Heat (UK)
Ocean/Seta, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 69%
Your car looks a bit small. And you don't get much warning of corners coming up, so unless you keep one eye on the map, you'll keep crashing. But at least you get a proper 3D view of the track. Hardly a favourite, but some people love it to bits.

7/10

FINAL FANTASY II (US)
Alternative name: Final Fantasy IV (JAP)
Square, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
A strange one this, as in Japan it's the fourth in a very popular series. This is the first version to make it to the SNES, and while it's graphically basic, the lovely music and the involving nature of the quest lifts it way above lesser RPGs.

8/10

FINAL FIGHT (JAP/US/UK)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 86%
The best walking-along-beating-people-up game on the Super Nintendo. On the plus side are its brilliant graphics, varied opposition and devastating moves. On the minus side? It lacks a two-player mode, and therefore tends to get a little dull in the long-term.

8/10

FINAL FIGHT GUY (JAP)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player
A pointless new version where the best character, Cody, gets the chop, and Guy replaces him. A poor game-music CD is included. The game is slightly easier than the original.

8/10

FIRE DODGEBALL (JAP)
Sunsoft, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A cute, anime version of a very weird game (see *SD Dodgeball* for details). The graphics are pretty good, but the game itself is a bit too simple to be particularly rewarding. The lengthy intro sequences before each game don't help, either.

6/10

F-ZERO (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP1 86%
The definitive Mode 7 racing game. Dead fast and dead smooth. And dead deadly too, if you don't watch out for the vicious computer-controlled hover cars. Bland scenery and an unlikely futuristic setting are unfortunate, but it's both a decent game and an impressive demonstration of just what the SNES can do.

8/10

GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING (US)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 18%
Boxing games are invariably awful – but this awful?

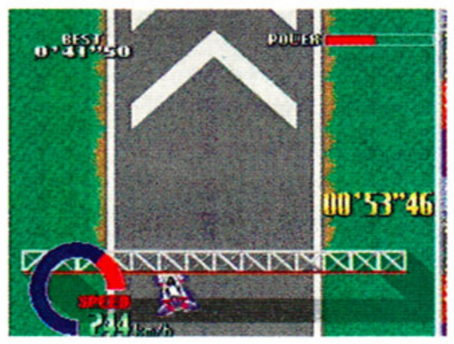
2/10

GOLDEN FIGHTER (JAP)
Culture Brain, 12 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 42%
A very ropy *Street Fighter II* 'tribute'. The graphics are rubbish, the gameplay's rubbish, the sound's rubbish... This is one to avoid if you can possibly help it.

4/10

GPX CYBER FORMULA (JAP)
Alternative name: Cyberspin (US)
Takara, 8 Mbit
1 player
Another top-view scroller, and another case of yikes-was-that-a-corner? But this time, for a change, we've got anime characters racing in anime cars. And really smooth scrolling. Other than that – average.

6/10



GRADIUS III (JAP/US)
Konami, 4 Mbit
1 player
Similar to the coin-op and – astonishingly – all packed onto a 4 meg cart, this is one to check out. It's an early title, so slow-down is a problem – it rather scuppers the otherwise beautiful graphics and powerful sound. Still, it's more impressive and playable than *Super R-Type*.

7/10

GUNDAM F-91 (JAP)
Bandai, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
A huge selling (in Japan) arcade/strategy game, with Japanese text. Still playable if you are willing to persevere, but this is essentially one for real robot fans only.

6/10

HAT TRICK HERO (JAP)
Alternative name: Super Soccer Champ (US)
Taito, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A slick conversion of the coin-op *Football Champ*. It's incredibly fast, but it's rather too easy in one-player mode – you'll need to play a chum to have any fun. Oh, and it's not as good as *Super Soccer*.

7/10

HOLE-IN-ONE GOLF (JAP/US)
HAL, 8 Mbit
1 to 4 players
A fairly old game, but still one of the best golf sims available – what it lacks in

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE

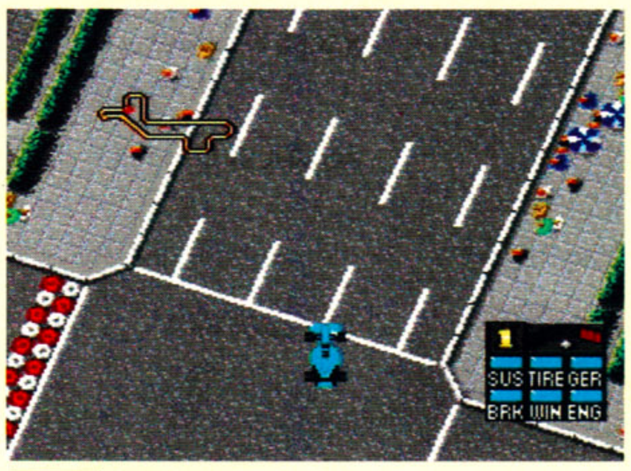
SUPER PLAY TOP 5 DRIVING GAMES

Predictable? Us? *Super Mario Kart* roars into first place in our poll of poles. (As in 'pole' position – geddit?) To be honest, it doesn't really have any serious competition at the moment – *F-Zero* is technically impressive and fun, but lacks the character and depth of *Mario*, while the rest are *miles* behind. Look to *Human's Grand Prix* to change all that though...

1 SUPER MARIO KART (93%)
What can we say? Brilliantly imaginative racing action, a weird (but brilliant) head-to-head duel game, and lots of brilliant characters. Brilliant!

2 F-ZERO (86%)
Technically very impressive – how many people bought a SNES based on the look of this alone? – and playable futuristic driving game. Great fun.

3 TOP GEAR (76%)
The nearest thing to the *Lotus* games on the SNES – about as fast as you could get on the Super NES, though better graphics would be a help.



4 SUPER F1 CIRCUS (83 %)
The best of the overhead-view crop, with enough detail, and good enough car handling, to make up for the can't-see-where-you're-going problems.

5 F-1 EXHAUST HEAT (69%)
Slightly empty looking, but fast, effective and playable, Formula 1-based game. We expect to see much better out soon though.

technical ingenuity, it makes up for in simple pick-up-and-play user friendliness. The overhead view used isn't much like playing the real game, but nice Mode 7 course introductions help – as does turning the music off!

7/10

HOME ALONE (JAP/US/UK)
THQ, 4 Mbit
1 player
A thoroughly dire attempt to cash in on the success of the movie. Hopeless graphics and sound do nothing to rescue the banal gameplay from the claws of drudgery and tedium. A waste of money.

2/10

HOOK (JAP/US)
Sony Imagesoft, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 72%
Slow-moving, but otherwise an attractive platformer that ties in with the film quite neatly. It's a bit easy to finish, though, so it'll be no, er, Peter Pan.

7/10

HYPERZONE (JAP/US)
Hal, 8 Mbit
1 player
A very poor 3D space shoot-'em-up using Mode 7, but with nothing else to recommend it. Tedium City is your only destination when you've started this one up.

3/10

JACK NICKLAUS GOLF (US)
Tradewest, 4 Mbit
4 players
Fans of golf games that present things from just behind the player will like the look of this, but the painfully slow way it draws the screen before each shot, not to mention the could-be-better power meter, help muck everything up. Not one of our favourites, but it will find its fans.

6/10

JERRY BOY (JAP)
Alternative name: Smartball (US)
Sony Imagesoft, 8 Mbit
1 player
A run-of-the-mill platform game with only its blob-shaped hero to distinguish it from the crowd. Very average.

6/10

JOE AND MAC (JAP/US/UK)
Data East/Elite, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 72%
A good conversion of the original arcade machine, with a few bits missing, and a few more tagged on. Graphically it's nice and colourful, but the tunes don't vary and the gameplay becomes very repetitive far too soon. Not much of challenge here, but younger players should enjoy it.

7/10

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL (JAP/ US)
Electronic Arts, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
What was a brilliant game on the Mega Drive and Amiga simply doesn't cut the mustard on the SNES. The programmers weren't equipped to convert it, as can be seen in the uninspiring graphics. It's said that the official UK release (called *John Madden '93*) – will make amends.

5/10

KINGS QUEST V
Bronson, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Nothing to do with the Sierra range of computer adventures, this recent addition to an inexplicably popular range of *Zelda*-style FRPs looks, to the untrained British eye at least, like a big pile of steaming nob. If you speak Japanese it might, of course, be fab – but we doubt it. Impossible to judge.

?/10

KING OF THE MONSTERS (JAP)
Takara, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A fairly enjoyable Neo Geo game that seems to have been clumsily converted to the SNES. It's really too dull and unimpressive to get even fans of the original exited.

5/10

KOSHIYEN 2 (JAP)
KAC, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 70%
This would be the most bog standard baseball game except that it's very weird and very Japanese. Not bad, overall.

7/10

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE (US/UK)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 79%
A curious blend of pie-throwing, puzzle-solving and platform action make this a refreshing challenge. Graphics and sound are reasonable, but it's the excellently paced gameplay that makes the game. Passwords should be given more regularly to reduce repetition though.

8/10

LAGOON (JAP/US)
Kemco, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
This is a fairly involving game, taking some elements from the *Zelda* series, but forgetting a lot of the more important ones – including a map, which can prove extremely irritating in certain areas. However, the graphics and sound are pleasant enough – this is worth considering, but only after you've played *Zelda*, *Final Fantasy II* and *Soul Blader*.

7/10

LAST FIGHTER TWIN (JAP)
Banpresto, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Super Deformer robots in a side-on beat-'em-up. Nice graphically and sonically, but a limited game all the same. For SD fans only.

6/10

LEGEND OF THE MYSTICAL NINJA (US)
Alternative name: Goeman 3 (JAP)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
One of the best games for the system, mixing RPG adventure-style wandering with side-on platform action. Wonderful oriental music, beautifully drawn graphics and an addictive challenge. Though the Japanese version is fairly accessible, buy the US cart to get the best value from this.

9/10

LEMMINGS (JAP/US/UK)
Sunsoft, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 86%
This one's been a huge hit on every format it's been released on. It takes a while to get to grips with, true, but *Lemmings* is one of the most original, ingenious and downright addictive games ever. Each level has a password, and there are loads of them (more than, for example, the Amiga version). A bit of a *Super Play* favourite, so you've really got to buy this.

8/10

MAGICAL GUY ADVENTURE (JAP)
Bandai, 4 Mbit
1 player
A jolly little platform game that combines wacky Japanese humour with cutsy sprites and backdrops. Hardly in the class of *Super Mario World* but moderately entertaining nevertheless.

6/10

MAGIC SWORD (JAP/US)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player
Capcom's first disappointing release, though not so surprising when you consider how bad the original arcade game was. Instead of giving the conversion the *UN Squadron* treatment and improving the gameplay for the SNES version, the programmers have simply translated the original. And they haven't even done that very well – this is a bodge job on the whole, with mixed quality graphics and terrible slow-down.

6/10

MARIO PAINT (JAP/US)
Nintendo, 8 Mbit + BB
1 'player'
A painting and music package that's really only for youngsters. It's very basic (only 16 colours? On a system with thousands?) and once you've drawn something, what do you do with it? It's free with the Nintendo mouse – but wait until that's on sale separately.

3/10

METAL JACKET (JAP)
Atlus, 8 Mbit
1 player
A horrible experience. Atlus aren't doing themselves any favours attempting a platform game – a genre where you have to be really good to stand out. This is an *E-SWAT* clone with stilted animation, dire sound and inept gameplay.

2/10

MUSYA (JAP)
Datam, 8 Mbit
1 player
One of the worst Super Famicom games ever – though it's up against stiff competition. Initially, the nicely shaded backdrops give it the look of a *Ninja Spirit* clone, but when you see your hero mince along and twiddle his stick, it palls.

3/10

NOLAN RYAN'S BASEBALL (US)
Romstar, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Just as slick as *Extra Innings*, but without the cute characters, and it's slightly trickier to control. Still, not a bad game overall.

7/10

OTHELLO WORLD (JAP)
Tsukuda, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Plays a strong game of *Othello* (if you set it to 'difficult'), looks good, and has some cute touches. But why would anyone want to spend £40 on a cartridge that plays *Othello*? Fine for brushing up your technique, but otherwise very sad indeed.

6/10

OUT OF THIS WORLD (US)
Alternative title: Outer World (JAP)
Interplay, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 81%
The graphics on this one are absolutely superb – playing it is just like watching a film. The action is varied, and there are lots of great cinema-style close-up shots, but in the end there isn't really enough there to make it a classic.

8/10

PAPER BOY 2 (US)
Mindscape, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP2 29%
In this game you're a newspaper delivery boy (or girl) and the object is to cycle along, er, delivering newspapers. There are some obstacles to avoid, things to hit with papers for bonus points, and that's about it. It's horribly boring, and really can't be recommended.

3/10

PARODIUS (JAP)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 player
An absolutely brilliant conversion of the coin-op, and one that easily ranks as the best of Konami's recent string of classics for the SNES. Superbly colourful sprites, a hilarious sense of the bizarre, and some excellent musical compositions are just the icing on the cake. Hugely enjoyable (though a little easy to finish).

9/10

PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS (JAP/US)
T&E Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players
The third addition to the 3D golf series, and unsurprisingly very similar to the others. Accurate down to the waves on the beach, but the porn movie music is laughable.

8/10

PGA TOUR GOLF (JAP/US)
Electronic Arts, 4 Mbit
1 to 4 players
Slick presentation (so-called experts talking you through the holes, etc), but it masks the fact that this is a fairly poor SNES conversion of an otherwise excellent sports game. On other systems *PGA Tour* is *the* golf sim, but here EA's lack of SNES expertise scuppers things. Still, you could do worse.

6/10

PHALLANX (JAP/US)
Kemco, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 70%
Horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-ups are two a penny on the Super Nintendo, and a new contender really has to do something different to stand out. This one has some decent graphics and challenging gameplay, but at the end of the day is pretty forgettable.

7/10

PILOTWINGS (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP1 92%
SNES-owning aviation fans aren't exactly spoilt for choice at the moment, but this should be enough to, er, spin their propellers for now. It boasts a huge range of flying machines (from parachutes to helicopters), and super-smooth 3D graphics, and there's even a decent game rattling around in there, too.

9/10

PIPEDREAM (JAP)
Bullet-Proof, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 66%
A well turned-out puzzle game where you've got to link different shaped bits of pipe together. Okay, but it gets boring without ever being exciting to start with.

6/10

PITFIGHTER (US)
THQ, 4 Mbit
1 player
An utterly appalling conversion of a popular coin-op. Dire graphics and tear-jerking gameplay are the main culprits. The pits.

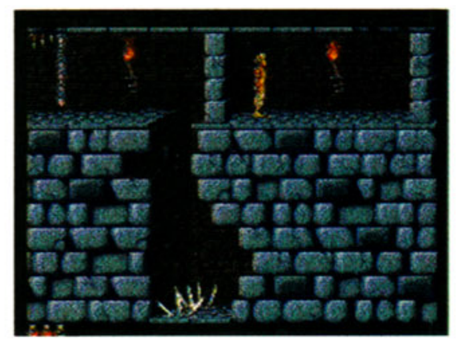
2/10

POPULOUS (JAP/UK/UK)
Imagineer, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 85%
The original Japanese version of a classic UK game that puts you in the shoes of God Almighty himself. A smashing game, though it *can* get frustrating (and quite boring) eventually.

8/10

PRINCE OF PERSIA (JAP)
NCS, 8 Mbit
1 player
A superb conversion of the computer classic with new graphics, a brilliant intro and a fab *Lawrence Of Arabia*-style soundtrack. Not an easy game, but the password system allows progression without too much trouble. A classic.

8/10



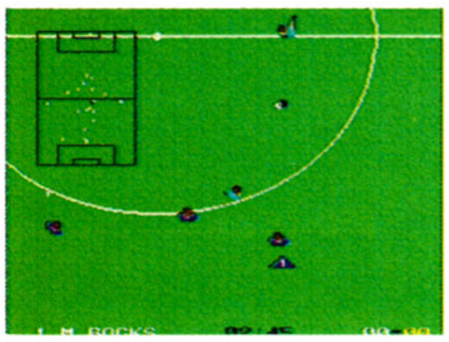
PRO SOCCER (JAP)
Alternative name: World League Soccer
Imagineer, 4 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players
A really shaky conversion of *Kick Off*,

It's much more fun with a friend! (And so's playing games, ho ho.) Two player games are about the best fun there is, but – oh no! – *Mario Kart* takes the top slot again!

3 RAMPART (79%)
Crap graphics, but fast pace and high fun factor. A must buy.

with crude graphics and hopeless gameplay. Buy *Super Kick Off* instead.

3/10



RAIDEN TRAD (JAP/US)
Toei, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A great game on the PC Engine and Mega Drive, perhaps, but a tragically slow affair on the SNES and not recommended. It should have been such a good game – sadly it seems that the programmers were too inexperienced on the machine to do the job properly.

4/10

RAMPART (US)
Electronic Arts, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 79%
So primitive-looking you initially wonder why it was allowed to live. (Well, apart from the great 3D bit.) But a few minutes playing reveal a game that's actually brilliant fun, and two-player mode almost rivals *Mario Kart*.

7/10

RANMA 1/2 (JAP)
NCS Masiya, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A neat one-on-one beat-'em-up with some very odd anime characters (who change sex when they get wet, and sometimes into giant pandas – don't worry, there's a Japanese TV series which explains it all). Mismatching of characters can be a problem, but on the whole it's great to look at and play.

8/10

RIVAL TURF (JAP/US/UK)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 58%
Final Fight's main rival. Not as 'together' as its opponent – more repetitive baddies and rougher animation are the main qualms – but it has the enormous advantage of simultaneous two-player action, including a *Street Fighter II*-style head-to-head mode. Which one do you go for? Um, well there's always *Turtles*...

6/10

KUNIO KEN (JAP)
Technos, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
An odd mix of beat-'em-up and adventure game. We had lots of fun with it in the office, beating people about the head with pillows and suitcases, but we didn't have a clue what was going on as it's all in Japanese. You might be able to suss it out, but it got a lukewarm reception even in Japan. Impossible to judge.

?/10

THE ROCKETEER (JAP/US)
IGS, 8 Mbit
1 player
Lovely graphics, but that's about it. It consists of watching a string of mini-games in which you don't really get much say – it's just luck if you proceed from one game to the next. Awful.

3/10

ROBOCOP 3 (US/UK)
Ocean, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 66%
It's got a neat 'Robocop' feel, but gameplay-wise this is severely wanting. It's frustratingly difficult, and perseverance is rewarded by an unimaginative shooter with little connection with the film. For true, erm, 'Coppies' only.

5/10

ROGER CLEMENS' MVP BASEBALL (US)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 73%
Baseball games don't come much better presented than this. Fab animation and action viewed through different camera angles makes this thoroughly enjoyable.

8/10

ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS II (JAP/US)
Koei, 8 Mbit + BB
1-12 players
If you've got lots of friends(!) this is at least sociable. Loads of interlocking ancient Chinese kingdoms make alliances, split up, then make other alliances, lots of people (presumably) get killed, and we can't make sense of any of it. The recently-become-available US version reveals a fairly simple little game under all the maps and text-boxes, but still not recommended.

5/10

RPM RACING (JAP/US)
Interplay, 4 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players
RPM stands, in this case, for Radical Psycho Machines, ie those ridiculous trucks with big tyres that fascinate the Americans. The scrolling's rough, you need clairvoyant powers to anticipate corners, and it uses flickery interlace graphics to no obvious effect. But good fun.

6/10

SD DODGEBALL (JAP)
Banpresto, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players
Based on an imaginary (we hope) sport which involves knocking out members of the opposing team by throwing the ball at them, this is but one of a series of Dodgeball games (*Fire Dodgeball* being another) and probably the worst.

5/10

SD GREAT BATTLE (JAP)
Banpresto, 6 Mbit
1 player
Japan's hugely popular Super Deformer series has spawned a lot of Super Famicom spin-off games, and they sell well, no matter how cruddy they might be! This was the first to emerge, and really isn't anything to get excited about, being a crusty old arcade adventure with tedious gameplay. You have been warned!

4/10

SD GUNDAM (JAP)
Bandai, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Again we head off to Japanese RPG-land, this variant starring a 'Super Deformed' (ie squished and cutified) version of *Gundam*, the most popular 'mecha' robot character in Japan. The format is traditional Japanese RPG, but the crappy graphics and sound and use of Japanese text make it unplayable. Impossible to judge.

?/10

SIM CITY (JAP/US/UK)
Maxis/Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP1 84%
Build the city of your dreams... then bring it to its knees! The SNES version of this all-time great is probably the best yet (even more user-friendly) although it hardly pushes the machine to its limits. Extremely addictive, at least in the short-term.

8/10

SIM EARTH (JAP)
Imagineer, 6 Mbit + BB
1 player
A follow-on from *Sim City* that unfortunately tries to bite off more than it can chew. You're basically put in charge of the entire planet, which would be horrendous enough in itself, but when the whole game's in Japanese... er, no thanks. Impossible to judge

?/10

SONIC BLAST MAN (JAP)
Taito, 8 Mbit
1 player
A scrolling beat-'em-up with a niftier central character than most – he's a superhero with a deadly line in punches. It's a beat-'em-up nonetheless, though, and consequently gets pretty dull.

7/10

SOUL BLAZER (US)
Alternativer title: Soul Blader (JAP)
Enix, 8 Mbit + BB
1 players
Slick, graphically gorgeous and not entirely unlike *Zelda* (ie an RPG, Japanese-style). Avoid *Soul Blader*, the Japanese version (unless you're Japanese).

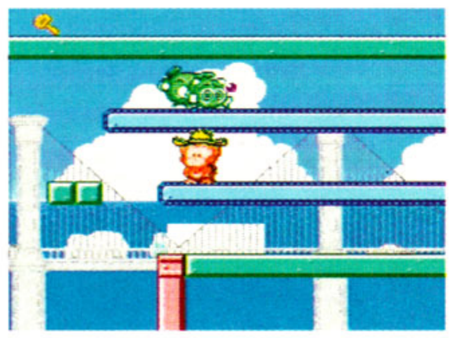
8/10

SPACE FOOTBALL (US)
Alternative name: Super Linearball (JAP)
Triffix, 4 Mbit
1 player
If you've played *Ballblazer* on the Commodore 64 before, that's probably the closest to this – football, played between two 'things' on a fast, 3D scrolling pitch. It's an idea that provides lots of thrills in the short-term, but it isn't really enough to justify splashing out this much loot on this game.

6/10

SPANKY'S QUEST (JAP/US)
Natsume, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A monkey called Spanky? Bouncing bubbles? You just wander round lots of similar-looking screens, killing baddies (with the bubbles) and collecting keys. Boring.

5/10



SPINDIZZY WORLDS (JAP/US/UK)
Ascii, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 69%
Spindizzy's sparkle seems to have dulled a little since its heyday on the Spectrum, partly thanks to the game's shift of emphasis from exploration to puzzle solving. A neat little thing all the same.

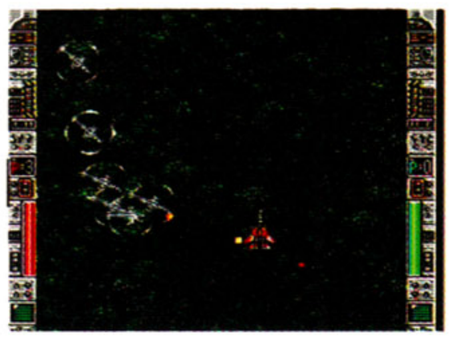
6/10

STREET FIGHTER II (JAP/US/UK)
Capcom, 16 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 94%
Don't believe the hype – *Street Fighter II* is rubbish! Just kidding. This is the game that's selling SNES' by the bucket-load. It's 'streets' ahead of other beat-'em-ups, and a near-perfect conversion of the unbelievably popular coin-op. A must buy, though very expensive on official release.

9/10

STRIKE GUNNER (JAP/US)
Athena, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Another average vertical blaster, with poor and unvaried backdrops, but reasonable sprites and some nice explosions. A dull game that only gets interesting in two-player mode when both ships can link together for mega firepower – not enough to recommend it, though.

6/10



SUPER ADVENTURE ISLAND (JAP/US/UK)
Hudson Soft, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 75%
Simplistic, *Wonderboy*-style gameplay abounds in this third instalment of the series made popular on the NES. Aside from the ugly Master Higgins, the colourful backgrounds and impressive Yuzo Koshiro dance tunes make this an attractive game. However, infinite continues mean this *is* a short-lived experience.

7/10

SUPER ALESTE (JAP)
Alternative name: Space Megaforce (US)
Toho/Compile, 8 Mbit
1 player
This was the first evidence that the SNES could handle a manically busy *Gunhed*-style shooter with ease – and then some. Incredible sprite handling (coupled with Mode 7 in places) and absolutely no slow-down mean it's more a technical achievement than particularly well designed, and it's a bit weapon-crazy – and hence unchallenging for some. But, having said that, it's an excellent buy anyway.

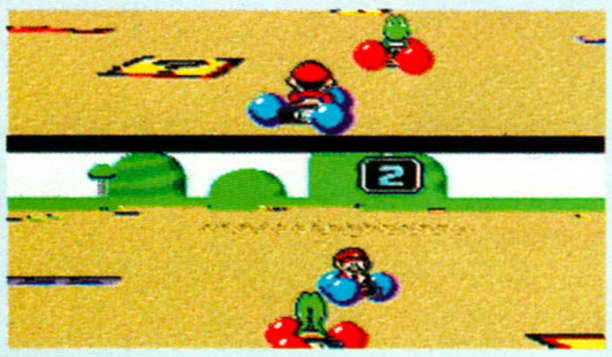
8/10

SUPER BASEBALL SIMULATOR 1,000 (JAP/US)
Culture Brain, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Another middling baseball game. The pitching and batting are both quite good, but the fielders are a bit unco-operative and the graphics scrappy, with lots of superfluous Mode 7 whizzing-in-and-out.

6/10

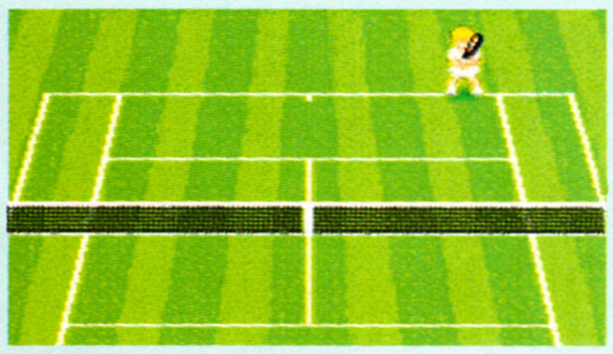
INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
SUPER PLAY

TOP 5 2-PLAYER GAMES



1 SUPER MARIO KART (93%)
We've said it all elsewhere. Just try playing this with a mate, *then* you'll see how utterly fab this is.

2 STREET FIGHTER II (94%)
Many people will rate it above *Mario Kart*, but we know which one's wasted most time in *this* office...



4 SUPER TENNIS (92%)
Excellent one-on-one tennis sim, and probably the best of the initial batch of games released with the UK SNES.

5 SUPER SMASH TV (84%)
No head-to-head, but wiping out the bad guys together proves almost as much fun.

INDEPENDENT SUPER NINTENDO MAGAZINE
SUPER PLAY

TOP 5 IN-GAME MUSIC

Game music fans unite! When our Jason goes home at night he likes to curl up with a nice game music CD. After all, the Super NES *is* a bit special in the sound department, with some of the tunes verging on the listenable in their own right. Here're our Top 5 in-game tunes – next month we'll have a feature on game music CDs in Japan!

1 SUPER CASTLEVANIA IV (91%)
Loads of flutes and double bases – atmospheric, haunting medieval stuff. It's got the best end-of-game tune ever.

2 ACTRAISER (90%)
Very orchestral, but not enough variety – the tunes are quite repetitive. The score is by top game musician Yuzo Koshiro.

3 LEGEND OF THE MYSTICAL NINJA
Another top Konami soundtrack. It's packed with very catchy oriental style tunes, and they're lots of them too.

4 SUPER PROBOTECTOR (90%)
Sounds just like a war film. An incredibly impressive score, and it works particularly well in context of the game.

5 GRADIUS III
A selection of punchy, arcade-style shoot-'em-up tunes – not spectacular, but they add a lot to the game.

SUPER BASES LOADED (US)
Alternative name: Super Professional Baseball (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
This all works okay, but it's just as limited in scope as all the other baseball games on the Super Nintendo, and the graphics are horribly jerky.

6/10

SUPER BASES LOADED II (US)
Alternative name: Super Professional Baseball II (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Extraordinarily and uncannily similar to *Super Bases Loaded I*. (See above.)

6/10

SUPER BATTLETANK (US)
Absolute, 4 Mbit
1 player
The prehistoric *Battlezone* coin-op gets a new lease of life in this Gulf War tank game. It looks a lot more lively than the wire-frame graphics of the original, and features some good explosions and exciting link sequences, but, quite frankly, it's still pretty boring.

5/10

SUPER BIRDIE RUSH (JAP)
Data East, 8 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players
This one's a cute cartoony-looking golf game that features some very nicely drawn fairways and greens – indeed, there's not much wrong with it. However, this isn't as playable as *Hole-in-One*, though it has the advantage over it of not being quite so dry in presentation.

7/10

SUPER BOWLING (JAP/US)
Athena, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 48%
There really isn't enough to bowling to fill out a whole game. This one struggles to pad itself out with neat graphical interludes and so on, but the real thing's so much more fun. (And much cheaper.)

4/10

SUPER CASTLEVANIA IV (JAP/US/UK)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 91%
A huge, sprawling sequel to the NES games. After a dull start this turns into one of the best platform games ever. More action is needed, but superb parallax and incredible sound-tracks generate an atmosphere appreciated by serious gamers.

9/10

SUPER CHINESE WORLD (JAP)
Culture Brain, 8 Mbit
1 player
A sequel to the popular 8-bit Famicom game *Little Ninja Bros*. The overhead viewpoint changes at regular intervals for combat. Cutish but rather 8-bit. Impossible to judge.

?/10

SUPER CUP SOCCER (JAP)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A rival to *Super Soccer*? Not really. This takes a side-on, jerkily scrolling viewpoint and isn't going to impress anyone. That's a shame, because it goes into lots of detail – moves and rules-wise – and there are some nice graphical touches.

6/10

SUPER DUNKSHOT (JAP)
Alternative name: NCAA Basketball (US)
HAL, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Famous for its 3D graphics – the pitch spins around and zooms in and out impressively. Brilliant sound effects, too. And it plays a splendid game of basketball. A little slow at times, perhaps, and a little confusing, but on the whole, great.

8/10

SUPER EDF (JAP/US)
Jaleco, 8 Mbit
1 player
A pretty, horizontally scrolling effort, but with some boring and unchallenging gameplay. Similar to the coin-op it's based on, *EDF* has some well drawn backdrops and sprites. But the music is bland, and slow-down spoils the action.

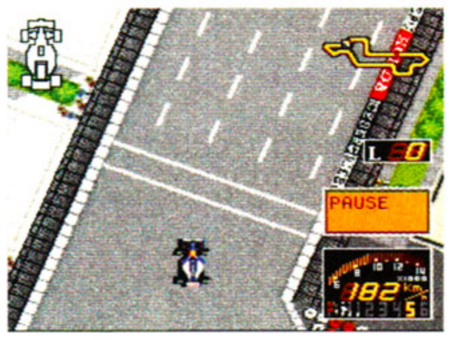
6/10

SUPER F1 CIRCUS (JAP)
Nichibutsu, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP1 83%
This looks ordinary, but is one of the few overhead-view racing games that works. Fast, with a good 'driving feel' and plenty of options to cater for the long-term player.

8/10

SUPER F1 GRAND PRIX (JAP)
Video System Co, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Nothing to do with the popular Amiga *F1 Grand Prix*, this is along the same lines as *Battle Grand Prix*, without the split-screen two-player mode. That means you get to see more of the track on-screen, and hence slightly more warning of corners coming up, but not much. It's a matter of taste, and very difficult.

5/10



SUPER FIRE PRO WRESTLING (JAP)
Human, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Nowhere near as smart-looking as *WWF*, but a much more challenging game, (the 20 available wrestlers behave differently, for a start.) But in one-player mode it's virtually impossible to beat the computer. Okay, if you can live with the dull visuals and manage to haul in a friend.

6/10

SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS (JAP/US/UK)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP2 85%
Another sequel, unique to the SNES. It's got some fab graphics (with a little slow-down) and nice tunes, but it's very tough – and, as it lacks battery back-up or passwords, it can be frustrating. The huge levels only have a few restart points, too.

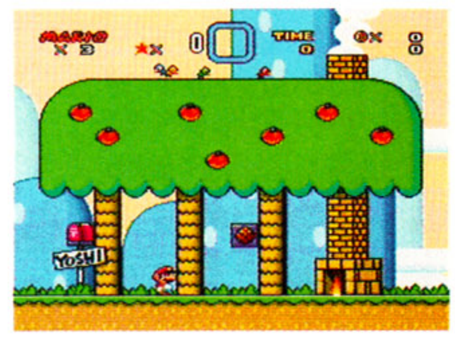
8/10

SUPER MARIO KART (JAP/US)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP1 93%
It's... It's... words fail us. The best driving game ever, the best two-player game ever, and quite possibly the best, well, game ever. It's perfect. Compatibility with UK machines is questionable, though, so it might be an idea to wait for the official release in January.

9/10

SUPER MARIO WORLD (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 4 Mbit + BB,
1 player, SP2 94%
What more can we say about this huge game? On the downside, the backgrounds become repetitive, but apart from that it's a gameplayer's dream come true – you'll want to spend weeks discovering every secret bit. Though real *Mario* aficionados tend to prefer Mario's third trip, this remains (along with *Zelda*) Nintendo's flagship game.

9/10



SUPER NINJA (JAP)
Koei, 12 Mbit + BB
1 player
You'd never know this was 12 meg – it has all the flat colours, simple graphics and laughable animation of an early NES game. It uses the same overhead view as *Zelda* et al, but being Japanese proves impossible to play. (Some loss.) Impossible to judge.

?/10

SUPER OFF ROAD (JAP/US)
Trade West, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
A variation on *Super Sprint*, but we're allowed to see the whole track at once (phew). We're racing monster trucks with a 3D(ish) perspective. The trucks look great bouncing round the course, and in the short-term it's good fun. Great rock soundtrack.

7/10

SUPER PANG (JAP)
Alternative name: Super Buster Bros (US)
Capcom, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP1 72%
The arcade original was a fantastic game, but one that allowed two people to play at once. This is a good conversion, with smart graphics and plenty of speed, but unfortunately only one can play, and that soon gets boring.

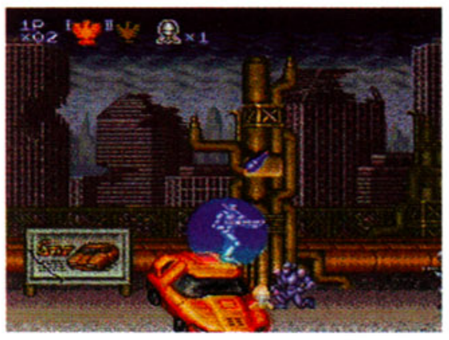
7/10

SUPER PLAY ACTION FOOTBALL (US)
Nintendo, 4Mbit + BB
1 or 2 players, SP2 71%
A faithful implementation of American football that'll please fans, but not the *John Madden*-basher we've been waiting for. We're keeping our fingers crossed for *Madden '93*.

7/10

SUPER PROBOTECTOR (UK)
Alternative names: Contra 3 (US)/Contra Spirits (JAP)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP2 90%
This is currently the best platform shoot-'em-up around. Superb use of Mode 7 and an amazing Konami soundtrack put this in the super league. Brilliant two-player action makes it essential stuff.

9/10



SUPER R-TYPE (JAP/US/UK)
Irem, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 72%
Beautifully designed baddies, and some of the best graphics on the SNES, make this one of the best-looking shooters around. Not perfect, thanks to jerky scrolling, terrible slow-down and no restart points. It also lacks the best parts of the coin op – *R-Type II*, surprisingly, not the original game – on which it's based.

7/10

SUPER SHANGHAI (JAP)
Hot B, 8 Mbit
1 player
It's hard to see what's 'super' about it, other than a show-offy intro and the odd silly sound effect, but as a version of *Shanghai*, the puzzle game, it works. Relaxing and compulsive, but not worth the dosh.

6/10

SUPER SMASH TV (JAP/US/UK)
Acclaim, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 84%
A translation of the ultra-violent coin-op, this is incredibly good short-term fun. No slow-down, plenty of tough bits and bags of addictiveness – you'll keep coming back to it. Recommended.

8/10

SUPER SOCCER (US/UK)
Alternative name: Super Formation Soccer (JAP)
Human/Nintendo, 4Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 83%
This is probably the closest you'll get to real, proper footy on the SNES at the moment. Impressive 3D graphics, and jolly good fun to play. But it doesn't really feel much like football as such, perhaps because the rules have been messed around a bit. We're still waiting for the Super Nintendo's equivalent of *Sensible Soccer*.

8/10

SUPER TENNIS (JAP/US/UK)
Tonkin House, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 92%
One of the best tennis games on any machine (and only rivalled by two fab tennis games on the PC Engine). The range of shots available is amazing, and they all behave realistically and are easy to access. It's not all simply bashing a ball backwards and forwards, either – there's a comprehensive line-up of tournaments and things to enter, too. Brilliant.

9/10

SUPER VALLIS (JAP)
Telenet, 8 Mbit
1 player
A conversion of the PC Engine CD ROM game, featuring the exploits of lots of Japanese girly characters but absolutely no excitement. It's just far too contrived, boring and linear to bother with.

5/10

SUPER WAGAN ISLAND (JAP)
Namcot, 8 Mbit
1 player
Funny, with cute graphics and likeable characters, this is a semi-arcade, semi-text-based adventure for the younger player – we got a fair way into it without understanding what was going on. (It's all in Japanese!) Impossible to judge.

?/10

SUPER WWF (JAP/US/UK)
Acclaim, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players, SP1 74%
Marvellous graphics, and enormous fun to play – short-term. But, all the different wrestlers behave exactly the same. And there's no tournament system like on other versions, either – you win or lose a fight and that's it. The upshot of all this is that *WWF* can't be wholeheartedly recommended.

7/10

SYLVALION (JAP)
Toshiba EMI, 8 Mbit
1 player
A peculiar maze-based scrolling shoot-'em-up where you guide a slithery dragon down baddy-infested passages. It looks a little tacky but is actually quite good. Not much of a challenge, though, and not a game you're likely to return to.

6/10

TECMO TEAM SOCCER (JAP)
Tecmo, 8 Mbit +BB
1 or 2 players
Yikes! A Super Famicom football management game! And it's all in Japanese! There are some dynamic match highlights, but unless you can read Japanese and have the patience of a elephant, stay away from this. Impossible to judge.

?/10

THUNDER SPIRITS (JAP/US)
Toshiba EMI, 8 Mbit
1 player
A conversion of the well respected Mega Drive game *Thunderforce 3*, but it unfortunately isn't anywhere near as good on the SNES. Guess why? Yep, slow-down spoils the action! Everything else is very similar to the MD game – ie no effort has been made to use any of the special features that the SNES can offer – which results in rather a missed opportunity.

6/10

TKO BOXING (US)
Alternative name: World Championship Boxing (JAP)
Sofel, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
Boxing games are very difficult to pull off, and this is the kind of thing that tends to happen as a result. It's well presented, but the gameplay is ridiculously simplistic and gets boring quickly. Steer clear.

3/10

TOP GEAR (US/UK)
Alternative name: Top Racer (JAP)
Kemco, 4 Mbit
1 or 2 players
So fast it'll make your eyes go squiffy. The screen is divided down the middle so two players can compete – just as well, as it's dull as a one-player game. The game was developed by Sheffield software house Gremlin, so fans of their *Lotus* games will be on familiar ground here. No smooth Mode 7 graphics or elaborate trackside detail, just lots of driving fun.

8/10

TURTLES IV: TURTLES IN TIME (JAP/US/UK)
Konami, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
The Turtles themselves might long since have handed over their cult status to whatever the current craze is, but that doesn't alter the fact that this is a very good beat-'em-up. Superb graphics, some remarkably clever characterisation, frantic gameplay, and a terrific assortment of different levels means plenty of fun. On the downside, it doesn't take long to become repetitive, and takes only slightly longer to finish.

8/10

ULTIMATE FOOTBALL (JAP)
Sammy, 8 Mbit
1 or 2 players
American football – what a ridiculous sport, eh? Still, that needn't prevent *Ultimate Football* from being a decent game. The problem is that this is so limited in both scope and technical merit that it can't really be recommended to anyone except real footy fans.

6/10

ULTRAMAN (JAP/US/UK)
Bandai, 8 Mbit
1 player
At first it's laughable: a ridiculous-looking giant superhero beating up monsters that are every inch like people dressed up in rubber suits. But then you realise that's how it's actually meant to be. This is based on those dreadful Japanese disaster movies you occasionally see on Channel 4. Laughable.

4/10

UN SQUADRON (US/UK)
Alternative name: Area 88 (JAP)
Capcom, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 91%
Brilliantly designed pseudo-conversion of the coin-op, and still one of the best games on the machine. Although it slows down in places, the action is still exciting. Sonically average, but graphically superb, and a *Super Play* favourite. 9

9/10

WAIALAE COUNTRY CLUB (JAP/US)
T & E Soft, 8 Mbit + BB
1 to 4 players
The second of three golf games all using the same programming and graphics (the others being *Augusta Golf* and *Pebble Beach*) but all representing different courses. Accurately depicted and probably the best golf series on the SNES by far.

8/10

WHEEL OF FORTUNE (US)
Gametek, 4 Mbit
1 to 2 players, SP2 19%
A massively tedious quiz-show conversion that really shouldn't have happened at all. A guest appearance by Vanna White is perhaps the only reason we actually gave it any marks at all.

2/10

WINGS II (US)
Alternative names: Sky Mission (JAP), Blazing Skies (UK)
Namco, 4 Mbit
1 player, SP2 71%
Not quite as impressive as the screen-shots (see *Super Play* issue 2) make it out to be, but still an undeniably attractive and atmospheric World War I game. It's also the only Super Nintendo flight sim where you can actually shoot things.

7/10

XANDRA'S BIG ADVENTURE (JAP)
Namcot, 8 Mbit
1 player, SP1 88%
An obscure platform game that ought to be better known. It's got a great central character, and the gameplay, though a little patchy, is a winner.

8/10

XARDION (JAP/US)
Asmik, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
From the makers of *D Force* comes another disaster! This time it's an *E-SWAT* clone – you control a robot that must progress through different zones, each with a guardian at the end. Sounds reasonable so far, but the dreadful graphics, awful sonics, and pathetic gameplay and structure ruin it completely.

4/10

YS III (JAP/US)
Tonkin House, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
Not as good as the prequel (*YS Books 1 & 2*) on the PC-Engine CD ROM, but still a top quality RPG. Instead of an overview of the landscape, you get a scrolling side-on perspective, and though it's not as big as the first two games, it's fun.

7/10

ZAN II (JAP)
Wolf Team, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player
A pretty full-screen map view – and plenty of territory to conquer, but working out what else it boasts proves difficult. Another unintelligible-to-Brits war game, we're afraid. Impossible to judge.

?/10

ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST (JAP/US/UK)
Nintendo, 8 Mbit + BB
1 player, SP2 93%
The long-awaited 16-bit *Zelda* is a brilliantly designed and implemented adventure that puts similar games to shame, in much the same way as *Mario* dominates the platform world – Nintendo's top programmer was involved in both games. This is, of course, utterly fabulous, though *Zelda* addicts may complain it's not quite as long and drawn out as previous games.

9/10

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NOVEMBER 1992

The original! Kicking off with an 8-page guide telling you everything there is to know about the Super Nintendo, it also features Super Player's Guides to *Prince Of Persia*, *Street Fighter II* and *Super Tennis*, plus reviews of games like *Super Mario Kart*, *Hook*, *Bart's Nightmare*, *Dinosaurs*, *Dragon's Lair* and many more! A must-have, especially with an ace *Super Play* pin-badge stuck to the front!

ISSUE 2
DECEMBER 1992

It gets bigger and better! 108 pages, packed to the spine with game reviews: *Axelay*, *Zelda III*, *Robocop 3*, *Wings II*, *Soul Blazer*, *Sonic Blast Man* and many more! Plus, a giant feature on games based on Japanese anime, another on baseball games, Super Player's Guides to *Zelda* and *Mario Kart*, plus a special report on the Tokyo Nintendo show by top games creator Peter Molyneux. It's all here!

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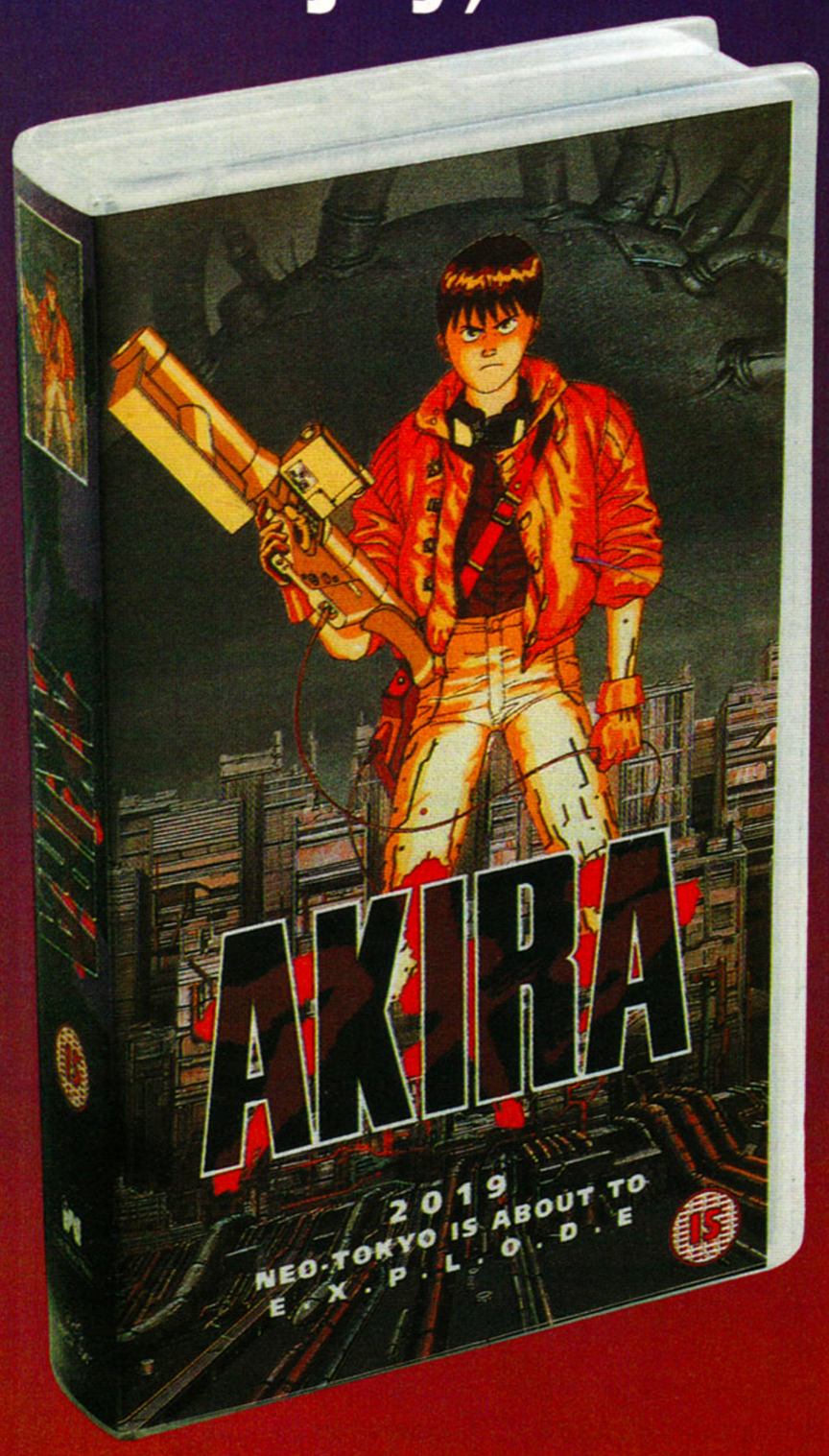

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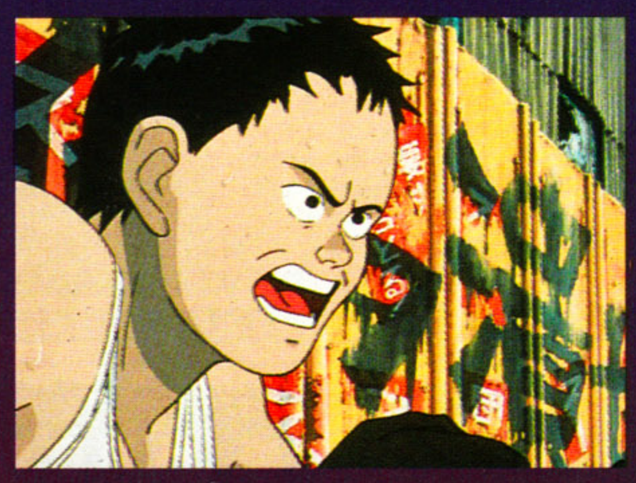

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DATEBOOK

The Datebook is *Super Play*'s at-a-glance guide to the major Super NES releases from Japan, America and the UK for the rest of the year, based on current release schedules. The chart is dominated by Japanese releases because a) there are more of them than UK or US ones, b) games tend to come out in Japan about a month or so earlier than they do in America, so we mention them because they'll be the first time a game has appeared anywhere and c) because the Japanese are better at posting early release schedules. Where there's a space in the chart it's because we couldn't get hold of the information at time of press. Oh yeah, and if some of the titles sound a little odd that's because they're literal translations from the Japanese. As soon as they come up with proper English titles, we'll let you know.

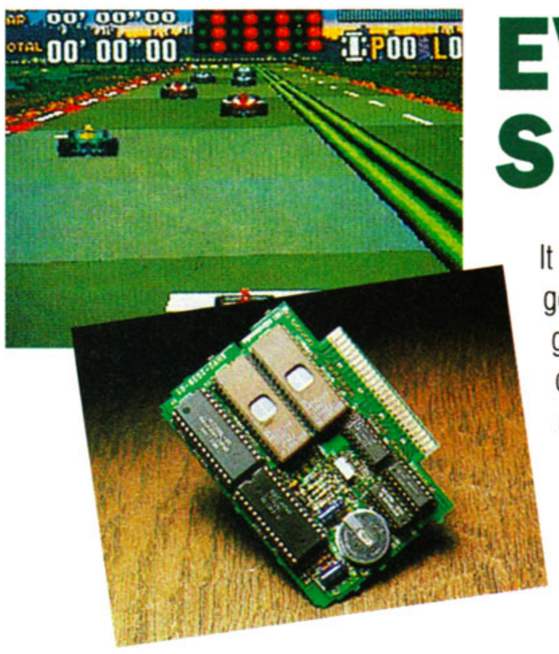
MONTH	DATE	GAME TITLE	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER	COUNTRY
Dec	4	Major Title	simulation	Irem	Jap
Dec	4	Super Black Bass	simulation	Hot B	Jap
Dec	4	Nobuo Serisawa's Birdy Try	sport	Toho	Jap
Dec	4	Mystery Circle	puzzle	G Amusements	Jap
Dec	6	Final Fantasy V	RPG	Square	Jap
Dec	11	Golden Fighter: Hyper version	beat-'em-up	Culture Brain	Jap
Dec	11	Sumo Spirits	beat-'em-up	Takara	Jap
Dec	11	Psycho Dream	action	Riot	Jap
Dec	11	Stealth	puzzle	Hect	Jap
Dec	11	Battlefield Soccer	sport	Banpresto	Jap
Dec	11	Pro Baseball League '93	sport	Epic	Jap
Dec	15	Super Star Wars	action	JVC	US
Dec	18	Benkei Legend	RPG	Sunsoft	Jap
Dec	18	SD Gundam Legend 2	RPG	Bandai	Jap
Dec	18	Amazing Tennis	sport	Pack-In Video	Jap
Dec	18	Tiny Toon Adventures	action	Konami	Jap
Dec	18	The King of Rallies	driving game	Meldac	Jap
Dec	18	Super Tetris 2 + Bombliss	puzzle	Bulletproof	Jap
Dec	18	Super Nichibutsu Mah Jong	puzzle	Nichibutsu	Jap
Dec	18	Assault Suits Darion	shoot-'em-up	Vic Tokai	Jap
Dec	18	Assault Suits Valken (Cybernator)	action	NCS Masiya	Jap
Dec	18	Super Sumo	beat-'em-up	Namco	Jap
Dec	18	Naxat Super Pinball (Jaki Crash)	simulation	Naxat	Jap
Dec	18	Super Star Wars	action	JVC	Jap
Dec	19	Juvenile Hero's World	RPG	Square	Jap
Dec	22	Ashibe	RPG	Takara	Jap
Dec	22	Super Kick Off	sport	Misawa Ents	Jap
Dec	22	Mystery Of The Black Cape	RPG	Natsume	Jap
Dec	22	Roadrunner vs Wile E Coyote	action	Sunsoft	Jap
Dec	23	Combat Tribes	beat-'em-up	Technos	Jap
Dec	25	Dragon's Fangs Mah Jong	puzzle	IGS	Jap
Dec	25	Laughter! Real Life Drama	puzzle	Taito	Jap
Dec	25	Super NBA Basketball	sport	Tecmo	Jap
Dec	25	Super Volley II	sport	Video Systems	Jap
Dec	25	Ranma 1/2 II	beat-'em-up	NCS Masiya	Jap
Dec	late	Rushing Beat 2	beat-'em-up	Jaleco	Jap
Dec	-	Bugel: Super Flying Hero	beat-'em-up	Sofel	Jap
Dec	–	Super High Impact	sports	Acclaim	US
Dec	–	Mickey's Magical Quest	action	Capcom	US
Dec	–	Caveman Ninja II	action	Data East	Jap
Dec	-	F-1 Exhaust Heat 2	driving game	Seta	Jap
Dec	–	Battle Blaze	beat-'em-up	Sammy	US
Dec	–	MVP Football	sport	Capcom	US
Dec	–	Royal Conquest	simulation	Jaleco	Jap

MONTH	DATE	GAME TITLE	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER	COUNTRY
Dec	–	Septentrion	RPG	Human	Jap
Dec	–	Firepower 2000 (SWIV)	shoot-'em-up	Sunsoft	US
Dec	–	Mechwarrior	simulation	Activision	US
Dec	–	Super Valis IV	action	Atlus	US
Dec	–	Death Valley Rally	action	Sunsoft	US
Dec	–	Metal Jack	action	Atlus	US
Dec	-	Super Mario Kart	driving	Nintendo	UK
Dec	–	Another World	platform	Interplay	UK
Dec	–	Bart's Nightmare	arcade	Acclaim	UK
Dec	–	Spiderman and the X-Men	platform	Acclaim	UK
Dec	–	Super Strike Gunner	shoot-'em-up	Activision	UK
Dec	–	Spindizzy Worlds	arcade	Activision	UK
Jan	3	Elfaria	RPG	Hudsonsoft	Jap
Jan	8	Alien vs Predator	action	IGS	Jap
Jan	14	Burai	action	IGS	Jap
Jan	14	Populous 2	strategy	Imagineer	Jap
Jan	29	Super Sokoban World	puzzle	Pack-in-Video	Jap
Jan	-	Warlord Nobunaga	strategy	Yanoman	Jap
Jan	-	Battle Tech	simulation	JVC	Jap
Jan	-	Equinox	RPG	Sony	Jap
Jan	-	The Steel Knight	RPG	Asmik	Jap
Jan	-	Super Chinese World 2	RPG	Culture Brain	Jap
Jan	-	Ernald	RPG	Enix	Jap
Jan	-	Sangokushi	strategy	Wolf Team	Jap
Jan	-	F1 Grand Prix part 2	driving game	Video System	Jap
Jan	-	Nigel Mansell F1 Championship	driving game	Infocom	Jap
Jan	–	Super Shadow of the Beast	action	IGS	US
Jan	-	Might and Magic 2	RPG	G Amusements	Jap
Jan	-	Septentrion	action	Human	Jap
Jan	-	Silva Saga 2	RPG	Seta	Jap
Jan	-	Dragon's Earth	RPG	Human	Jap
Jan	-	The Search for Wally	action	Tomy	US
Jan	-	Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure	RPG	Cobra team	Jap
Jan	-	Metal Max 2	action	Data East	Jap
Jan	-	Breath of Fire	RPG	Capcom	Jap
Jan	–	Alien 3	shoot-'em-up	Virgin	US
Jan	–	Battleclash	Super Scope	Nintendo	UK
Jan	–	Mario Paint	art package	Nintendo	UK
Jan	–	Prince of Persia	platform	Mindscape	UK
Jan	–	Road Runner	arcade	Sunsoft	UK
Jan	–	Robocop III	shoot-'em-up	Ocean	UK
Jan	–	Super Basketball	sport	HAL	UK
Jan	–	Mickey's Magical Quest	platform	Capcom	UK
Jan	–	Super Off Road	driving game	Trade West	UK
Jan	–	Super Parodius	shoot-'em-up	Konami	UK
Jan	–	Desert Strike	shoot-'em-up	Electronic Arts	UK
Jan	–	NHL PA Hockey '93	sport	Electronic Arts	UK
Jan	–	PGA Tour Golf	sport	Electronic Arts	UK

THOSE NEXT FEW OFFICIAL RELEASES IN FULL.

From left: *Super Strike Gunner*, *Spindizzy Worlds*, *Spiderman & The X-Men*, *Super Mario Kart*, *Bart's Nightmare* and *Another World*.

NEXT MONTH IN SUPER PLAY!



EVEN BETTER SNES GAMES!

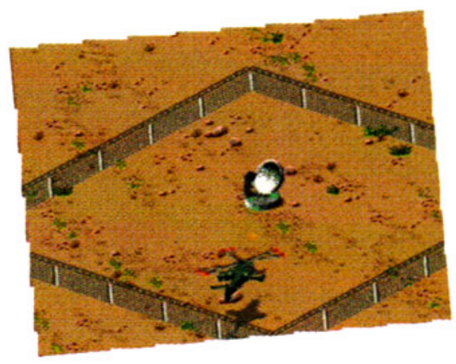
It might be hard to believe, but SNES graphics are going to get better and better. The reason? Special graphics chips which are being inserted into cartridges, adding to the Super Nintendo's already awesome capabilities. Next month in *Super Play* we reveal which games already carry these chips – you might actually own some of them! And we tell you about the advances you can look forward to next year, including details of the new Super FX chip.

PLUS THIS: THE BEST TIPS!

We'll be pulling all the stops out for issue 4 of *Super Play* to bring you a comprehensive guide to *Another World*, the fantasy adventure we rated at 81%in issue 1. There'll be lots of other exclusive playing tips, along with our regular Ask Ade column, and possibly an extra Super Player's Guide or two. Plus, all your complicated technical queries answered in Gamefreak.

THE BEST REVIEWS!

Next month we take to the skies over the Middle East with *Desert Strike*. How will it compare to the Mega Drive version? We've also got *Madden '93* – the best game on the Mega Drive, according to some, which has just arrived on the SNES. *Assault Suits Valken* features gigantic Japanese robots battling it out on your telly, while *Fatal Fury* challenges the *Street Fighter II* crown. Plus: two new contenders for the Top SNES Driving Game title – *Human Grand Prix* and *Super F-1 Hero*. We take them to their limits. And, who knows, maybe we'll even manage a review of the long-awaited *Equinox*. One thing's for certain – for the most reliable, spot-on reviews around, you've just got to get *Super Play* issue 4.



THE BEST... OTHER BITS!

On top of all that, the next issue will be crammed with loads of other stuff we either can't tell you about or simply haven't thought of yet. Rest assured, though – *Super Play* will continue to be the biggest and the best Super Nintendo magazine in Europe. No other Super NES mag has so many pages, or such comprehensive coverage.

The fourth, better-than-ever issue of *Super Play* will be revealed to the nation on Thurday 7 January. ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!

Great news! *Super Play*'s signed up a Japanese correspondent! You'll be able to read his first column next month! Hurrah!

CARTOGRAPHY

If you find any jargon in *Super Play*, Here's the place to look it up.

Adaptor: These come in various forms, but their basic job is to let software from one country run on a SNES from another. (See 'grey import'.)

Battery back-up (BB): Switch off a normal cart and all your hard work will disappear. Switch off one with battery back-up, however, and it'll keep all your high-scores and saved positions tucked away.

Bit: A one or a zero. Stick lots of these together in the right order and you've got a game. There are about 8 million in the average cart.

CD-ROM: A method for storing huge games on compact discs rather than cartridges. The Super NES CD-ROM drive is due to appear next year.

CPU: Central Processing Unit, the chip at the heart of any computer. In the Super NES it's a 65sc816 running at 3.58 MHz, and it's in charge of all the graphics and sound chips that make your console so fab.

DSP: Digital signal processor. An extra chip included in a cartridge to provide improved 3D graphics.

Grey import: Nintendo don't release games in the UK until months after Japan and the US. If you want them sooner, you'll have to find a grey import version. See the mail order ads in this issue, but remember, to use an import cart on a UK machine you'll need an adaptor that costs £15-£20. (See Supermarket on p97.)

Mbit: Or Megabit. A million bits.

Megabyte: 8 megabits – the average cart size.

Mega Drive: (*Get outa town! - Ed.*)

Mode 7: A unique SNES feature: 3D screen scaling and rotation.

NES: Nintendo Entertainment System. The earlier, cruder console that came before the Super Nintendo.

NTSC: The Japanese and US TV system. NTSC TVs are less flickery, running at 60Hz, but also less detailed, than UK ones, while NTSC machines run faster than PAL ones, and also use the full screen for the game image, without borders.

PAL: The 50Hz TV system used in the UK. Unless you've got an import machine, your SNES will use PAL, and plug straight into your TV's aerial socket. A foreign one won't, so make sure you've got a SCART TV.

PAL booster: Plugs into a Japanese or US SNES and allows the machine to be plugged into the aerial socket of an ordinary telly.

Parallax scrolling: The process where different parts of the background move at different speeds, giving the impression of depth.

RPG: Role Playing Game. One of those weird games with wizards, orcs and action points in. Occasionally called an FRP (Fantasy Role Playing game).

SCART: Posh TVs often have a SCART socket which cuts out much of the irrelevant electronics that deal with TV programmes. If your TV's got one, plug your SNES into it for a better picture. (If you've got an import machine, you'll *have* to plug it into the SCART socket.)

Scrolling: The process where the background moves across the screen, kind of like a movie camera panning.

SNES: Super Nintendo Entertainment System, aka Super Nintendo.

Super Scope: The bazooka-shaped light gun for the SNES, which can now be bought with it.

Sprite: Anything that moves around on the screen. Mario is a sprite.

Super Famicom: The Japanese name for the Super Nintendo.

Total!: Our sister magazine, covering Game Boy and NES as well as Super Nintendo.

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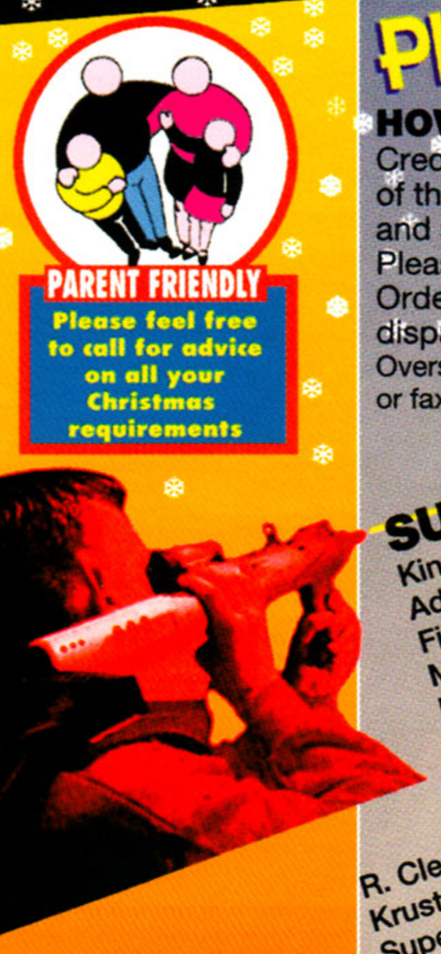

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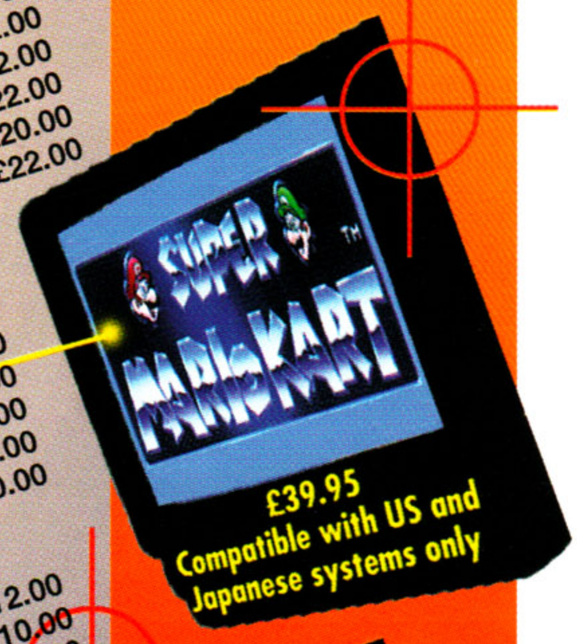

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